

Trotsky's Challenge

Historical Materialism Book Series

Editorial Board

Sébastien Budgen (*Paris*)

Steve Edwards (*London*)

Juan Grigera (*London*)

Marcel van der Linden (*Amsterdam*)

Peter Thomas (*London*)

VOLUME 114

The titles published in this series are listed at *brill.com/hm*



A cubo-futurist representation of Trotsky by P. Mizakian

Trotsky's Challenge

*The 'Literary Discussion' of 1924
and the Fight for the Bolshevik Revolution*

Translated, Annotated, and Introduced by

Frederick C. Corney



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Corney, Frederick C., editor, translator.

Title: Trotsky's challenge : the "Literary discussion" of 1924 and the fight for the Bolshevik Revolution / translated, annotated, and Introduced by Frederick C. Corney.

Description: Boston : Brill, 2015. | Series: Historical materialism book series | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2015032934 | ISBN 9789004217256 (hardback : alk. paper) | ISBN 9789004306660 (e-book)

Subjects: LCSH: Soviet Union--History--Revolution, 1917-1921--Sources. | Trotsky, Leon, 1879-1940. Uroki Oktiabria.

Classification: LCC DK265 .A5449 2015 | DDC 947.084/1--dc23

LC record available at <http://lcn.loc.gov/2015032934>

This publication has been typeset in the multilingual "Brill" typeface. With over 5,100 characters covering Latin, IPA, Greek, and Cyrillic, this typeface is especially suitable for use in the humanities. For more information, please see www.brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 1570-1522

ISBN 978-90-04-21725-6 (hardback)

ISBN 978-90-04-30666-0 (e-book)

Copyright 2016 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Hes & De Graaf, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Rodopi and Hotei Publishing.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher.

Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Koninklijke Brill NV provided that the appropriate fees are paid directly to The Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Drive, Suite 910, Danvers, MA 01923, USA. Fees are subject to change.

Brill has made all reasonable efforts to trace all rights holders to any copyrighted material used in this work. In cases where these efforts have not been successful the publisher welcomes communications from copyrights holders, so that the appropriate acknowledgements can be made in future editions, and to settle other permission matters.

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

To Caroline, Sarah and Rachel



Contents

Preface XIII

Acknowledgements XVII

Introduction: Anatomy of a Polemic 1

Document 1: 'The Lessons of October' (14 October 1924) 86

L. Trotsky

Document 2: 'Who Carried Out the October Revolution? (On the "History" of October in L. Trotsky's Book 1917)' (30 October 1924) 139

I. Stepanov

Document 3: 'How the History of October Must not be Written (On L. Trotsky's Book 1917)' (2 November 1924) 147

N. Bukharin

Document 4: 'The Komsomol and October (On Comrade Trotsky's "The Lessons of October")' (12 November 1924) 163

Central, Moscow, and Leningrad Committees of Komsomol

Document 5: 'On the Intolerable Distortion of Historical Facts (On Comrade Trotsky's Article "The Uprising")' (15 November 1924) 169

D. Lebed'

Document 6: 'How Should the History of October be Approached? (Comrade Trotsky's "The Lessons of October")' (19 November 1924) 176

G. Sokol'nikov

Document 7: 'On Comrade Trotsky's "The Lessons of October"' (25 November 1924) 188

N. Babakhan

Document 8: 'Trotskyism or Leninism? Report by Comrade L.B. Kamenev' (26 November 1924) 199

L. Kamenev

- Document 9: 'Trotskyism or Leninism?' (26 November 1924)** 260
I. Stalin
- Document 10: 'Our Differences' (November 1924)** 283
L. Trotsky
- Document 11: 'Bolshevism or Trotskyism (Where the Trotskyist Line is Leading)' (30 November 1924)** 322
G. Zinoviev
- Document 12: 'An Unsuccessful Depiction of the "German October" (Comrade Trotsky's "The Lessons of October")' (30 November 1924)** 365
O. Kuusinen
- Document 13: 'On the Lessons of Trotskyism (L. Trotsky's Book *Lenin*)' (9 December 1924)** 387
V. Molotov
- Document 14: The Chkheidze Controversy (9 December 1924)** 421
- Document 15: 'The Question of the Lessons of October' (16 December 1924)** 427
N. Krupskaja
- Document 16: 'The October Revolution and the Tactics of Russian Communists' (17 December 1924)** 432
I. Stalin
- Document 17: "'The Lessons of October" and the Bulgarian Communist Party' (20 December 1924)** 464
V. Kolarov
- Document 18: 'Letter to Comrades' (21 December 1924)** 481
Leopol'd Averbakh, et al.
- Document 19: 'The Autobiography of Trotskyism' (22 December 1924)** 485
G. Safarov

Document 20: 'The Theory of Permanent Revolution. An Article by Comrade N.I. Bukharin' (28 December 1924) 514
N. Bukharin

Document 21: 'To All the Members of the Central Committee Who are Enemies of Trotskyism' (1924) 555
N. Bukharin

Document 22: "'The New Discussion". An Article by Com. A.I. Rykov' (28 December 1924) 570
A.I. Rykov

Document 23: 'Not Every Effort is Successful' (1925) 576
A. Andreev

Document 24: 'Letter from Comrade Trotsky to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)' (15 January 1925) 582
L. Trotsky

Document 25: 'Resolution of the Plenums of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) and of the Central Control Commission on the Actions of Comrade Trotsky' (17 January 1925) 586

Document 26: 'Mistakes in "The Lessons of October" by Comrade Trotsky' (January 1925) 595
S.A. Piontkovskii

Document 27: 'Lenin, Conspiratoriality, October' (1925) 607
E. Kviring

Document 28: 'The Ideological Foundations of Trotskyism' (1925) 619
B. Kun

Document 29: "'The Lessons of October" and Trotskyism' (1925) 647
A. Bubnov

Document 30: 'The Struggle for the Party' (January 1925) 681
S. Kanatchikov

Appendix 1: Introduction to ‘The Lessons of the Revolution’ (28 December 1924) 689

Paul Levi

Appendix 2: ‘The Lessons of the October Experiment’ (1925) 696

Karl Kautsky

Glossary 703

Bibliography 801

Index 822

Preface

In the aspirational revolutionary state of Soviet Russia in the final weeks of 1924, the Bolsheviks engaged in an extraordinarily self-referential – although not introspective – ‘literary discussion’ about the very foundations of their revolutionary claims. Focussed on ‘The Lessons of October’, an analysis of the October Revolution by Leon Trotsky, the ‘literary discussion’ was not the Bolshevik Party’s attempt to debate through serious analysis the course and significance of their revolution, but rather an effort to assure its members that it had uncovered grave threats to the integrity of the Soviet state’s founding event. The ‘discussion’ nonetheless exposes a pivotal moment in early Soviet history when leading Bolsheviks and others felt an urgent need to offer a public display of recrimination of the bearer of those perceived threats: Trotsky. The ‘discussion’ was more than the sum of its parts. It not only revealed much about the immediate political and economic problems afflicting Soviet Russia at the time, it also exposed deeper pathologies in the socialist project in general, and ushered in a radical treatment for those perceived pathologies.

The present volume of translations comprises the most complete record in English of the ‘literary discussion’. There is no substitute in historical research for direct access to primary source materials. The apparatus that accompanies these pieces, including the annotations, the glossary of terms, and the bibliography, are intended as informational and analytical guides to help the reader navigate this moment in early Soviet history. The introduction represents my own reading of these documents and of their broader significance, but it makes no claims to sole interpretative authority.

A Note on the Translations and Annotations

‘The Lessons of October’ was quickly translated into English in 1925 by Susan Lawrence, a British Labour Party activist, and again in 1937 by John G. Wright, a member of the American Socialist Workers’ Party. Several of the major contributions to the ‘literary discussion’ were translated in 1925 in various collections by international Communist groups, an indication of the passions aroused by the Soviet acclamation of the October Revolution. These early translations suffered from various infelicities, inconsistencies, errors, and omissions, and I returned to the Russian originals of the texts in the newspapers *Pravda* [Truth] and *Izvestiia* [News] for my own translations. Still, the early efforts served as useful guides for my translations, and I am grateful to those uncelebrated

and long-gone translators. I have endeavoured to preserve in translation the nuances of the different terms used in Russian. In light of their own political convictions, the earlier translators saw little reason to translate, for example, *revoliutsiia*, *perevorot*, *vosstanie* with any other words than the blanket term 'revolution'. For the sake of semantic nuance, I have translated these key terms consistently through all of these pieces as 'revolution', 'overthrow', and 'insurrection', respectively. I have tried to be consistent throughout the 'discussion' in my translation of Russian terms. Similarly, the florid styles of individual pieces of the 'discussion', sometimes lost in translation in the interests of clarity and directness, are worth preserving. They add the aesthetic texture that the conscientious translator should always endeavour to convey. In the case of two more recent translations, Stalin's 'Trotskyism or Leninism' and 'The October Revolution and the Tactics of Russian Communists', I have reproduced those English translations. Bukharin's 'The Theory of Permanent Revolution' has appeared in a partial published translation, and I have used that translation and supplemented it with my own translation of the rest of the original. I have included as Appendices two pieces that are not part of the 'literary discussion' per se. Karl Kautsky and Paul Levi used the 'literary discussion' to criticise both Trotsky and Soviet Russia at the time, and they offer an interesting counterpoint to the self-reflexive internal world of the 'literary discussion'. I have reproduced existing translations of these pieces. I thank the Marxists Internet Archive for the permission to use all of these translations, although I have taken the liberty of making small modifications here and there to match the translation conventions I have used in the other pieces in this collection (e.g. Trotskyists instead of Trotskyites; 'party workers', instead of 'workers', for '*rabotniki*'; Leningrad instead of Petrograd wherever it appeared as Leningrad in the original, and so on). In other cases, I have updated certain translations, such as 'drift along with the current' rather than the archaic 'funk' for the Russian word '*dreifit*', and I have restored or removed quotation marks to conform to the original texts.

In the footnotes I provide the most complete source information I was able to find for references and quotations in the texts. I indicate clearly wherever the footnotes are original to the texts, and I have furnished my own source references to them in square brackets afterwards. Wherever I have been unable to locate the source of a quotation or reference, I have also clearly indicated this in the footnotes. Quotations from Lenin are taken from the fourth edition of his *Collected Works* published in the 1960s. Where place-names and personal names are relatively well-known, I have used the more common English variant: Trotsky instead of Trotskii, Zinoviev instead of Zinov'ev, Bolshevik instead of Bol'shevik, Smolny instead of Smol'nyi, and so on.

A Note on the Glossary

The glossary at the end of the volume is intended as an essay-in-notes. To read through this glossary is to navigate the new political, cultural, and linguistic terrain of Soviet Russia in late 1924. The new institutions that mark out this landscape – for example, the Russian Communist Party (bolshevik), the Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom), the Red International of Trade Unions (Profintern), the Central Control Commission (CCC), Comintern, and so on – map a radically novel set of political and ideological cues and aspirations. The novel sites of assembly – for example, plenums, committees, conferences, and congresses – and the designations for the actors – for example, workers, proletarians, peasants, bourgeois – are political arguments as much as they are descriptive terms. A new historical chronology is offered by a new mythic iconography – Aurora, Finland Station, Winter Palace, Kronstadt, Shalash and Sarai, etc. This glossary also permits a view of the broader temporal and geographic context. Historical figures – Karl Marx, Nikolai Chernyshevsky, Louis Auguste Blanqui, August Bebel, and Eduard Bernstein, among many – vie for attention with avatars of other unrealised revolutionary aspirations, of roads not taken – for example, Amadeo Bordiga, Fedor Dan, Louis-Olivier Frossard. It offers a portrait of young men and women who were deeply contemptuous of the old traditions and committed to real change at the long *fin-de-siècle*, joining populist and revolutionary movements often in their late teens and early twenties. It is impossible to read this glossary without acquiring a sense of the overpoweringly reductive new revolutionary lexicon – Leninism, Trotskyism, Stalinism, Liber-Danism, Hilferdingism, Bernsteinism, Economism, Vperedism, Zinovievites, Plekhanovites, Opposition, among many. The glossary is designed so that the reader will derive from, say, the terms 'Recallists' or 'Opposition' both the immediate and broader contexts of those terms as they were understood at the time of the 'literary discussion'. A new genre of revolutionary biography is also in evidence here, as lives are marked retrospectively by the revolutionary milestones they passed or missed. These milestones measure the levels of commitment here of at least two generations of men and women who sought to reimagine society in radically new ways. The political cosmos of these people was dominated by fierce conflict and infused with a deep awareness of the power of language, the need to make things mean actively, to take control of meaning. The sources of their identity derived not from their birthplace, upbringing, education, or occupation, but from their visceral identification with political causes that sought to correct perceived injustices. Their identities were also forged in intimate, often stifling, political milieux. Theirs was a world of pseudonyms and secrecy and repression and exile, of lives fractured

by repeated dislocations both at home and abroad. Although they often looked outward to posterity and history writ large, their gaze was often also directed inwards at themselves and their own political lights. Their long view often came with blinkers. Many of them shared appallingly similar fates, their death-dates telling a particularly Soviet story, and the dates of their posthumous rehabilitations telling a poignant post-Soviet tale. For many of them, the new ideological and political world that they helped to build in the 1920s and 1930s turned out to be a very perilous place indeed.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my editor at Brill, Sébastien Budgen, for his support for this project from the outset. He it was who allayed my fears about its growing length as I found more and more relevant pieces. He also sent me a stream of helpful citations, tips, and contacts. I would also like to thank David Broder and Danny Hayward at Brill for shepherding this manuscript through publication, and to Simon Mussell for his thorough copy-editing. This project would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of the Inter-Library Loan staff at Swem Library at The College of William & Mary. They not only kept me supplied with a steady flow of books and articles, but located many obscure Russian and German pieces from the early 1920s. My gratitude goes to the staff of the Houghton Library at Harvard University, Butler Library at Columbia University, and the main library at Cambridge University, where I was able to conduct valuable source work. I would also like to acknowledge the Summer Lab at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, an invaluable resource for Soviet/Russian scholars. Long may it last. Scott Nelson was an excellent sounding board for my ideas, and also helped me to source some of my quotations. My dear Russian colleagues Sasha and Lena Prokhorov responded with grace and alacrity to my many knotty questions about Russian idioms and other resistant terms. I thank them all for their patience with me and for their friendship. Long may that last as well. Alexander Reznik, Gleb Albert, and Bernhard Bayerlein were very generous in making several important primary sources available to me. I would also like to thank Gleb Albert for his very helpful reader's comments. Finally, I would like to acknowledge two long overdue debts of gratitude. Some thirty years ago in Canada, Ralph Carter Elwood, Professor of Russian History, taught me the delights (and eye-strain) of meticulous source work. This present volume owes a debt to the rigorous professional standards he instilled in his students. I have not thanked him explicitly before but I do so now. I would also like to express my gratitude to and affection for my undergraduate professor of Russian, Jim Riordan. In English pubs and at many, many dire Portsmouth Football Club games, he passed on to me his life-long love of things Russian and forgave me my long interest in Trotsky. I thank him now in his final absence. My deepest debt of gratitude goes, as it always must, to Caroline, Sarah, and Rachel for their love and support, and for not making me feel guilty for being ensconced in my office so much and for failing to answer the electric telephone when they called.

Anatomy of a Polemic

Still, through the dust of this dim prose appears
The clash of armies, and the sheen of spears.¹

...

The time was past when Friedrich believed he was waging a personal battle against the world order and its defenders ... Now he possessed an unwritten but internationally recognised right to illegality.²

...

A political struggle is in its essence a struggle of interests and forces, not of arguments.³

• •

On 5 May 1920, Leon Trotsky, People's Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs, looked out from the steps of a makeshift tribune across a crowd gathered in front of the Bolshoi Theatre on the newly named Sverdlov Square in Moscow. Vladimir Lenin, chair of the Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom), stood atop the tribune, a dynamic study in dark jacket with cloth cap in hand, his goateed chin thrust forward, addressing the Red Army soldiers destined for the Polish front. Trotsky stood to his left, partially obscuring his brother-in-law, Lev Kamenev, chair of the Moscow Soviet. At one point at that meeting, Trotsky spoke from atop the tribune, this time with Lenin and Kamenev observing from

-
- ¹ This epigraph appeared anonymously on the title page of the first English translation of Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October' (Trotsky 1925a). It is from a poem, 'Epistle to Mr. Alexander Pope', by Andrew Lang, a nineteenth-century poet and literary critic. The original 'flight of arrows' in the poem was replaced with 'clash of armies' in the epigraph (Lang 1893, p. 48).
 - ² Roth 1968, p. 123 (Roth's 'Trotsky novel').
 - ³ Trotsky 1972a, pp. 86–7.

the steps.⁴ To the assembled, it would have seemed quite natural to see Trotsky on a par with Lenin. A year before, a poem in the Bolshevik newspaper, *Pravda* [*Truth*], had extolled the duo: 'Friends are easy to recognise / On one road with Lenin and Trotsky I stand firm'.⁵

At the height of the Civil War, Anatolii Lunacharsky, the first People's Commissar of Enlightenment of the Soviet state, observed that some people regarded Trotsky as the 'true leader of the Russian Revolution', while confiding in the same breath that he, Lunacharsky, was only poorly acquainted with Lenin's *vita*.⁶ An early biographer saw Trotsky as the very 'tribune of the revolution', with a 'brilliant, lively mind, splendid dialectics, a fiery temperament, strikingly quick wits and a keen intelligence'.⁷ Another described him as 'the most brilliant, most paradoxical figure among the Bolshevik leaders ... who is able to combine logical argument with beautiful rhetoric which sometimes drips with biting, scathing sarcasm, and sometimes attains genuine pathos'.⁸ On the international stage, Trotsky's was also a voice to be heeded. One Roger Lévy wrote in 1920 that Trotsky's ambition had made of him 'a man alone', but also one who was 'always happy to take the stage and amaze the world'.⁹ To Colonel Raymond Robins, official representative of the American Red Cross in Russia in 1918, he was a 'son of a bitch, but the greatest Jew since Jesus Christ'.¹⁰ An American journalist mused whether he was 'the Napoleon whose coming Tolstoi foretold'.¹¹ As the scourge of the counter-revolution, Trotsky would have been unperturbed by these characterisations. Still, given his widely acknowledged role in the increasingly iconic October Revolution and the recently victorious Civil War, Trotsky might have permitted himself a measure of prideful self-satisfaction as he looked out over the soldiers in 1920, confident in his place in any future pantheon of Bolshevik heroes.

This revolutionary tableau was featured three years later in a special pictorial issue of the journal *Krasnaia niva* [*Red Cornfield*] dedicated to the revolutionary role of the Red Army in the Civil War.¹² As the recent recipient of the Order

4 King 1997, pp. 68–73.

5 'Pravda-Matka. Krasnoarmeiskii rasskaz', *Pravda*, no. 20, 7 November 1919, p. 3.

6 Lunacharskii 1919, p. 78, p. 58.

7 Ustinov 1920, p. 66.

8 Smolenskii 1921, p. 9.

9 Lévy 1920, p. 10, p. 101.

10 Hale 1961, p. 101.

11 Suzanne Pekoff, 'Will Trotzky's Terrible Cossacks Ruin Europe?' *Los Angeles Times*, 19 November 1922, p. 37.

12 *Krasnaia niva*, no. 8, 23 February 1923, p. 16. Cf. King 1997, pp. 66–71.

of the Red Banner for his prowess in that war, the 'Leader of the Red Army' was fêted in the issue, replete with a full-page sketch, photographs in full oratorical flourish, and an article on his activities on the Civil War front.¹³ In 1923, there was still every reason to see this scene from 1920 as a reliable representation of the current state of power relations in the party, as a tableau largely fixed. To many people, it seemed to form a perfect revolutionary trinity, Lenin seemingly caught by the camera in a moment of revolutionary defiance, his trusted lieutenants flanking him, the masses hanging on his every word. Trotsky had revolutionary, if not quite Bolshevik, pedigree. In the days of the *Iskra* [*Spark*] newspaper, the ideological and organisational centre of the Russian Social Democratic Party in the emigration in the first years of the twentieth century, Trotsky was 'The Pen' [*Pero*] become 'Lenin's cudgel', as the Marxist theoretician David Riazanov called him at the divisive Second Party Congress in 1903.¹⁴ Tellingly, Trotsky had likened Lenin at that time to 'the Incorruptible', even though Trotsky had some sympathy for the 'Iskraist Montagne' that was being destroyed at that time.¹⁵ Whether he saw himself later as a Danton or a Marat to Lenin's Robespierre is a matter for conjecture. In the difficult period of forced emigration after 1905, he tried to rise above the political fray of the difficult politics inside Russian Social Democracy at that time, publishing non-factional newspapers in Vienna to rally the party faithful inside Russia, but also frequenting Austrian Social-Democratic circles, Viennese coffee-houses and art galleries, and serving as a war correspondent of some repute in the Balkans.¹⁶ For some he came of revolutionary age only in 1917, and especially during October and the ensuing Civil War, the uncompromising brutality of many of his orders during the Civil War seeming to them to burnish his new-found revolutionary steel. 'Ruthlessness', he told the Fourth World Congress of the Communist International (Comintern) in 1922, was the 'highest revolutionary humanitarianism' because it shortened the 'arduous road of the crisis'. He left no doubt as to the real purpose of that ruthlessness, adding that the Civil War was never just a 'military process' but 'above all, a political process'.¹⁷

In the three years between the taking of the photograph and its appearance in the journal, then, and notwithstanding his increasingly frank criticisms of the political status quo, Trotsky's cult status seemed largely secure. Indeed, in 1923 the town of Gatchina near Petrograd, the site of a Civil War battle

13 *Krasnaia niva*, no. 8, 23 February 1923, p. 4, pp. 20–3.

14 'V.I. Lenin – G.V. Plekhanovu. 2.III.03' 1925, p. 221; Volkogonov 1996, p. 26.

15 Trotsky 1980a, p. 37.

16 Corney 1985.

17 Trotsky 1953, p. 222.

between the Red Army and the forces of the White General Nikolai Iudenich, was renamed Trotsk in his honour. *Ten Days That Shook the World*, the ode to the October Revolution by the American Communist and journalist John Reed that had helped establish Trotsky alongside Lenin in the annals of international communism, was blessed with an introduction by Lenin when it appeared in Russian translation in 1924.¹⁸ Trotsky's literary writings, published as *Literature and Revolution* in 1924, earned a letter of support from 36 of Soviet Russia's most famous literati, including Boris Pilniak, Sergei Esenin, Isaak Babel, and Aleksei Tolstoy, in praise of his fight for the preservation of diverse literary trends in the country.¹⁹ His political and historical writings continued to be published by the State Publishing House (Gosizdat) during the 1920s. As late as 1924, one of his nemeses, the head of the Comintern Grigorii Zinoviev, described him as 'one of our most authoritative leaders. Come what may, joint work with comrade Trotsky in the Politburo and in other organs is necessary. And this is guaranteed. Do not believe the rumours, legends, etc. There have been disagreements and there will be more. The party will decide who is right'.²⁰

Zinoviev was more right about the party than he could have known at the time. In a few short years, Trotsky (and Kamenev along with him) was gone from that Soviet photograph (and the broader stage of history). Later printings were either cropped to exclude them or they were retouched out, a conceit maintained in a 1933 painting from this photograph by the famous socialist-realist painter Isaak Brodsky.²¹ A different iconography was underway. These often brute efforts to falsify photographs and shape perceptions of the past have long been understood in the West (and in *glasnost*-era Russia) to reveal something essential about the Stalinist regime, 'airbrush history in the Soviet style' as one scholar put it.²² But the often clumsy falsification of photographs should not distract from a far more enduring shift in the political culture of Soviet Russia underway at this time, a shift in the revolutionary narrative-in-the-making from one in which Trotsky served to personify the very essence of revolutionary action to one in which he served to personify its very anti-thesis. Just as P. Mizakian's 1920 cubo-futurist drawing of Trotsky, reproduced at the start of this volume, reduced him to a set of flat and fractured planes, the Bolshevik leaders sought to do the same to his political persona. They did so

18 Reed 1982; Rid 1924.

19 Marie 2006, p. 307.

20 Zinov'ev 1924a, p. 125.

21 King 1997, pp. 70–1.

22 Wright 1985, p. 216.

most concertedly and most irrevocably during the 'literary discussion' [*literaturnaia diskussii*] in late 1924.

The 'Literary Discussion' of 1924

In October of that year, Trotsky published the third volume of his *Collected Works*, a volume entitled *1917*, replete with a special synthetic introduction entitled 'The Lessons of October'.²³ *Pravda* announced its publication alongside notices of other major publications by Lenin and leading Bolsheviks (and an advertisement for the Russian edition of Reed's *Ten Days that Shook the World*) in commemoration of the forthcoming seventh anniversary of the October Revolution.²⁴ The first 5,000 copies were dispatched to subscribers or sold in very short order, only a lack of adequate printing materials holding up the remaining print run of 35,000. Rumours reached Moscow that local regions were banning sales of the volume, moving Joseph Stalin to write to the State Publishing House (*Gosizdat*) in mid-November for clarification.²⁵ The reaction to the introduction was immediate and negative. Over the next few weeks a series of articles appeared in the pages of *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* [*News*] excoriating Trotsky's introduction for a broad range of political, ideological, even epistemological sins, for its claims about the putative foundation event of the new Soviet state, the October Revolution, and for its depiction of the historical role of the Bolshevik Party in Russia's recent and not-so-recent revolutionary past. 'The Lessons of October' was the culmination, or at least the most coherent and uncompromising articulation to date, of Trotsky's thinking on the current plight of the revolutionary project in Soviet Russia, indeed on the state of his own dreams for the future of the revolution at that time. In other writings from 1922 and 1923 he had already mooted two issues integral to his thinking, namely the internationalisation of the revolution and the bureaucratisation of the governing apparatus in Soviet Russia.²⁶ Indeed, the net of the 'literary discussion' was cast more widely than Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October', including in its critique of Trotsky all recent works with a perceived bearing on the issues, most

23 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. ix–lxvii.

24 *Pravda*, 14 October 1924, p. 8.

25 'A.I. Berdnikov – I.V. Stalin. 21 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, p. 167.

26 Trotskii 1923a; 'Tov. Trotskii o germanskoi revoliutsii. Doklad na gubernskom s'ezde metallistov', *Pravda*, no. 239, 21 October 1923, p. 2; Doklad tov. Trotskogo', *Pravda*, no. 71, 29 March 1922, p. 3; cf. 'Biurokratizm', *Pravda*, no. 65, 22 March 1922, p. 2.

notably his biographical notes on Lenin and his *The New Course*, both of which had appeared earlier in 1924.²⁷

The 'discussion' was an event in its own right both in the capitalist world and in the Communist movement. *The Times* of London, for example, followed the 'discussion' closely throughout, as early observers of Soviet Russia sought to divine the machinations inside the Bolshevik Party and the fate they augured. The newspaper highlighted the major critiques of Trotsky's reading of the October Revolution in his 'unpopular book', as one correspondent put it.²⁸ The newspaper sought to gauge the true level of support for the man inside Soviet Russia, although it also traced with some satisfaction his demise and his brief recanting of his criticisms.²⁹ For their part, foreign Communists took up the cudgel either for or against Trotsky in their own countries. 'The Lessons of October' was rapidly translated into the languages of the socialist and Communist world, appearing in English in a special issue of *Inprecorr*, the Communist International's news magazine, as well as in German, French, Italian, Spanish, and Bulgarian.³⁰ Some of the major critical contributions in the 'discussion' were also quickly translated into English and German and published in edited collections by foreign Communist publishing houses.³¹ This foreign contest was not without its pettinesses, and a translator might find his own as much as Trotsky's political credentials on trial. The German translation, offered one reviewer, 'teems on every page, almost on every line, with such errors, gaps and distortions that it is difficult not to accuse the publisher of anything less than the "grossest negligence"'.³²

The 'literary discussion' had its own dynamic, its own internal logic inside Soviet Russia. The political and theoretical heavy-lifting of the 'discussion' was

27 Trotsky 1971; Trotsky 1965a.

28 'Dissensions in Moscow', *The Times*, 14 November 1924, p. 12; 'Bolshevist Discord', *The Times*, 24 November 1924, p. 11; 'Trotsky's Offending Programme', *The Times*, 3 December 1924, p. 13; 'Trotsky's Unpopular Book', *The Times*, 2 January 1925, p. 9; 'Soviet Attack on Trotsky', *The Times*, 7 January 1925, p. 11; 'Trotsky's Heresy', *The Times*, 8 January 1925, p. 11.

29 'Rallying Malcontents', *The Times*, 2 January 1925, p. 9; 'Trotsky Dismissed', *The Times*, 19 January 1925, p. 12; 'Trotsky Dismissed', *The Manchester Guardian*, 19 January 1925, p. 7; 'Trotsky Deposed', *The Times*, 20 January 1925, p. 13; 'Trotsky. A Party By Himself', *The Manchester Guardian*, 20 January 1925, p. 9; 'Trotsky's Dismissal', *The Times*, 27 January 1925, p. 13; 'Trotsky's Defence', *The Times*, 30 January 1925, p. 11.

30 Trotzki 1925, pp. 210–26; Trotsky 1925a; Trotzki 1925, Trotsky 1924; Trotskii 1925; Trotskii 1924c; Trotsky 1925b.

31 *The Errors of Trotskyism* 1925; Zinoviev, G.E., I. Stalin and L. Kamenev 1925; *Um den Oktober* 1925.

32 J.S. 1925, p. 387.

performed by the party's heavyweights. Of the six full members of the Politburo (besides Trotsky) in 1924, five wrote substantial analytical and ideological pieces condemning Trotsky's recent musings on the October Revolution. Stalin, by that time General Secretary of the Central Committee (CC) of the Russian Communist Party (bolsheviks) (RKP(b)), Kamenev, and Zinoviev were all jockeying for power since Lenin's death in January 1924. They all made their voices heard loud and clear. Nikolai Bukharin, editor of *Pravda* and a member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, and Aleksei Rykov, chairman of the Sovnarkom, also contributed significant pieces. Of the full members of the Politburo, only Mikhail Tomsy, head of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (VTsSPS), did not contribute. These first articles were open calls to arms to the party. 'I have no doubt', wrote Kamenev rhetorically in his piece, 'that the party will call on a number of authors, participants in these events, actual warriors from those days, to identify and analyse comrade Trotsky's various distortions of all the decisive moments of party history in that era: the April demonstration is distorted, the April Party Conference is distorted, the events of June and July are distorted, the events surrounding the activity of the Pre-parliament are distorted, even the course of events in October itself is distorted'.³³ Among other older party members of good Bolshevik pedigree who contributed critical articles were Viacheslav Molotov, candidate member of the Politburo and staunch Stalin supporter; Nadezhda Krupskaya, Lenin's widow and champion of Communist education; Andrei Bubnov, head of the Political Directory of the Red Army; Ivan Skvortsov-Stepanov, a member of the Moscow Military Revolutionary Committee (VRK) in October 1917; Grigori Sokol'nikov, People's Commissar of Finance of the RSFSR; Mikhail Ol'minskii, a professor at the Socialist (later Communist) Academy and deeply involved in a project to write a history of the October Revolution and the party (History of the RKP(b) and the October Revolution, Istpart for short); and his successor in that organisation, Semen Kanatchikov, head of the Department of the Press [*Otdel pechati*] of the CC of the RKP(b). Younger, though still prominent, regional Bolsheviks like Emmanuil Kviring and Dmitrii Lebed', the First and Second Secretaries respectively of the CC of the Communist Party of the Ukraine (KPU), presented the view from outside Moscow and Leningrad. The gravity of this criticism was further conveyed by regular published statements of criticism in the state and party press by the CC of the RKP(b), Communist Youth League (Komsomol), and local party committees.

The 'literary discussion' could not however be seen to be the realm of the old guard alone. It *required* input from the younger guard, a service (or opportu-

33 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 200.

ity) that was not without present and future peril in the quickening atmosphere of internal party politics. Nikolai Chaplin, General Secretary of the Komsomol, and Leopol'd Averbakh, editor of its newspaper *Molodaia Gvardiia* [*Young Guard*], were only 22 and 21 years of age, respectively, when they wrote their criticisms on behalf of the Komsomol. Pieces were also forthcoming from Sergei Piontkovskii, a historian who came late to the RKP(b) in September 1918, and Andrei Andreevich, head of the influential Union of Railway Workers (Vikzhel'). Georgii Safarov worked in the Eastern Department of the Comintern at the time of the 'discussion', and, like N. Babakhan in Kazan', added a local voice to the chorus against Trotsky. Three prominent foreign Communists in the Comintern also took part in the 'discussion', and were offered as vivid evidence of its far broader implications for those countries recently embroiled in their own would-be revolutionary events. Otto Kuusinen had been involved in Bolshevik Party work in Finland until 1921, while Béla Kun and Vasili Kolarov had experienced first-hand, respectively, the abortive Hungarian Soviet Republic of 1919, and the defeat of the armed insurrection in Bulgaria in September 1923. Purity of political faith was not the qualification for participating in this 'discussion', for the 'discussion' itself was part of the process of demarcating that political faith. A committed performance, though, was essential. Even a controversial figure like Aleksandr Martynov, denounced variously in the past as a populist, economist, Menshevik, and liquidationist by Lenin among many, felt moved to make Zinoviev the generous offer of his own detailed critique of Trotsky's work, should *Pravda* or *Bol'shevik* [*Bolshevik*] be interested in publishing it.³⁴ They were not. For his part, Trotsky responded sparingly to the 'discussion'. In his own defence he wrote a letter to the CC plenum in mid-January 1925 after the 'discussion' had ended, and this was published in *Pravda*. More revealing though was an extended response he wrote at the height of the 'discussion' in November 1924, but which was never published in Soviet Russia.³⁵

It is indisputable that the 'discussion' was decided upon and orchestrated from the top down. At its plenum on 24 October 1924, the CC of the RKP(b) announced, under the signatures of Kamenev and Zinoviev, that Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October' was a 'conscious distortion of the history of the party' designed to achieve 'comrade Trotsky's factional goals'. The CC charged the leading party institutions with the 'distribution of appropriate works' to counter these goals, the immediate publication in popular editions of all of Lenin's

34 'A.S. Martynov-Piker – G.E. Zinov'ev, ne pozdnee 13 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, pp. 162–3.

35 Trotsky, Document 24; Trotsky, Document 10.

articles and documents from February to October 1917, and the republication of *Pravda* for 1917 in all its various guises in those difficult times.³⁶ The cue was quickly heeded by local party committees. On 10 November, after an address by Zinoviev about Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October', the Leningrad District Committee of the party resolved to raise the Trotsky issue at the next plenum so that broad discussion of the work could be *prevented* by the 'most decisive and exhaustive measures possible to defend Leninism'. It further resolved to ask the CC to publish a collection of responses that would expose the mistakes in the issues raised in Trotsky's piece. This was clearly part of a much wider initiative, as was indicated by the Leningrad Committee's decision to ask the CC of the party to take decisive measures to expel any members who, at the Thirteenth Party Congress in May 1924, had opposed the Congress's condemnation of the 'petty-bourgeois deviation' in the party.³⁷ The Bureau of the CC of the Komsomol also met on 10 November in closed session to affirm the party's condemnation of Trotsky's work and highlight the particular danger it represented for the younger members of the party, insisting that the CC of the RKP(b) publish an article by the Komsomol on this subject in *Pravda* forthwith.³⁸ A week later, Kamenev signed a draft resolution by a group in the Moscow Committee of the party similarly condemning Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October' for crudely distorting the history of Bolshevism, the history of the October Revolution, and the relationship between Lenin on the one hand and the party and the CC on the other.³⁹

Trotsky's Challenge to Bolshevik, Party, and Revolution

Scholars have been most intrigued by what the 'literary discussion' reveals about the overt and covert power struggle in the upper reaches of the party in the wake of Lenin's death. As R.V. Daniels put it, the "'Lessons of October" was obviously a declaration of political war against Kamenev and Zinoviev, and the party leadership reacted accordingly'.⁴⁰ This approach is perhaps unsurpris-

36 'Proekt rezoliutsii plenuma TsK RKP(b). 24 oktiabria 1924 g.' 1991, p. 159.

37 'Iz protokola zasedaniiia plenuma Leningradskogo gubkoma RKP(b). 10 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, p. 161.

38 'Protokol zasedaniiia Biuro TsK RLKSM. 10 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, p. 162. The article appeared two days later (Komsomol, Document 4).

39 'Proekt rezoliutsii soveshchaniia aktiva Moskovskogo komiteta RKP(b). 17 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, p. 165.

40 Daniels 1960, p. 243.

ing given the ultimate denouement of the leadership struggle and its fateful impact on the future course of Soviet history, but it runs the risk of reducing the 'literary discussion' to individual egotism, Machiavellian prowess, and a naked hunger for power. In this vein, historian Dmitrii Volkogonov cited a conversation between Trotsky and Lenin shortly after 25 October 1917 in which Trotsky doubted that anyone in the party was capable of taking over, should either of them be assassinated by the Whites. For Volkogonov this was evidence that Trotsky saw only one possible heir to Lenin, proof of Trotsky's 'vanity and love of power'.⁴¹ Others have argued however that this approach merely reinforces the 'myths' of Stalin's inexorable rise to power, reduces other leaders like Trotsky and Bukharin to Stalin's 'level', and denies 'the deep differences in their understanding of social problems and the ways to solve them, by claiming that all were guided by the same selfish, careerist ambitions'.⁴²

This is not to deny that the 'literary discussion' was rife with self-serving statements, petty invective, and outright character assassination on all sides, often deployed on the basis of the flimsiest of evidence and in the service of quite mercenary ends. Personal ambition undoubtedly played a part in Trotsky's often effusive praise of Lenin, as did personal pique in his scathing criticism of Zinoviev and Kamenev, and his decision to ignore Stalin completely in 'The Lessons of October'. Such motives undoubtedly also played their part in the Old Bolsheviks' sense of outrage against the upstart Trotsky and his self-appointed mission to enlighten everyone about the October Revolution. Trotsky's use of the term 'we Bolsheviks'⁴³ in reference to actions taken prior to his entry into the party surely galled them, as did the role he had assumed as arbiter of the correctness of Lenin's interpretation of Marx.⁴⁴ But the 'literary discussion' was about more than personal animosity and power. The content of the 'discussion' mattered for reasons that transcended personal power politics.

In 'The Lessons of October' Trotsky presented an unyielding biography of Russia's revolutionary development at a time of deep unclarity in the party about both the contours of that biography and the identity of those who could be considered its 'legitimate' authors. At a time when the party leaders were well aware that many people in Soviet Russia in 1924 were still unclear precisely what the plethora of Soviet neologisms really meant, for example, Trotsky threatened to define terms like 'Bolshevik', 'Bolshevism', 'Communist', even 'party', for them. He offered a radically foreshortened chronology of the

41 Volkogonov 1988, p. 31. The cited conversation is from Trotsky 1970a, p. 338.

42 Danilov and Porter 1990, p. 137.

43 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 123.

44 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 120 ff.

revolution, arguing that the period from February 1917 to February 1918 was the *only* period when revolutionary credentials could be legitimately submitted to scrutiny. Prior to that, he wrote, revolutionaries were still preparing for revolution in the harsh context of tsarist oppression, and they always had to be ready to change tactics if survival required. Such tactical feints were the 'direct and most immediate root of frictions and crises inside the party', and this constituted 'almost an immutable law' in the party's development.⁴⁵ He implied that such conflict was endemic and inevitable in the socialist community in that period and largely irrelevant to the immediate issue of revolutionary insurrection until 1917. Trotsky did not deny that this early period was crucial in the formation of the revolutionary party:

The traditions of the heroic struggle against tsarism; the habits and methods of revolutionary self-sacrifice, bound up with the conditions of the underground; the broad theoretical examination of the revolutionary experience of all mankind; the struggle against Menshevism; the struggle against Populism; the struggle against conciliationism; the supreme experience of the 1905 revolution; the theoretical assimilation of this experience during the years of counter-revolution; the approach to the problems of the international labour movement in light of the revolutionary lessons of 1905 – taken together, these tempered our party in an exceptional way, giving it the most penetrating theoretical insight and unparalleled revolutionary sweep.⁴⁶

Trotsky conceded that he himself had made 'real and major organisational mistakes' in this period, but he declared his political conscience clear at least from 1917 onwards: 'from the first day of my arrival in Petrograd, I carried out my work in complete agreement with the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks'.⁴⁷ He had delayed his formal entry into the party, he added, only to allow his own group, the initially non-factional Interdistrict Organisation of the RSDRP [*mezhraiontsy*], time to be accommodated into the party. By contrast, Zinoviev and Kamenev had made their mistakes precisely when it really mattered, in 1917. In Trotsky's view, then, only the most recent past was prologue. The problem was not the mistakes revolutionaries had made – all had been guilty of that at some time – but *when* they made their mistakes, because that bespoke

45 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 89.

46 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 133–4.

47 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 137, 136.

a profound misreading or ignorance of revolutionary signals. In 1917, he argued, the February Revolution had radically changed the entire political equation, for the argument was now over the *nature* of the revolution that would be pursued in the space left by the end of tsarist rule. In Trotsky's view, pre-revolutionary tactics determined by political practicalities gave way in 1917 to revolutionary strategy defined by ideological imperatives. The single germane issue now for the party and its leaders was the question of power, and who had the revolutionary will to recognise the moment, seize it, and wield that power. Trotsky divided the party into those who believed that this current 'bourgeois' phase of the revolution – with power being shared by the Provisional Government and the Menshevik- and SR-dominated Soviets – should be allowed to run its course, and those who advocated pushing through this bourgeois phase towards a proletarian socialist insurrection. He was noticeably silent in 'The Lessons of October' on his earlier flagship theory of permanent revolution, his most coherent thinking on the difficult issue of the relationship between the bourgeois and the socialist revolution. He had, however, addressed it briefly in *The New Course* a year earlier in an effort to head off accusations that he had 'underestimated' the role of the peasantry in the revolution, and to argue that his position had adhered all along with the fundamental line of Bolshevism on this issue.⁴⁸

Trotsky's condemnation of Old Bolsheviks like Zinoviev and Kamenev as both short-sighted and highly fallible was full-throated in *The Lessons of October*. He reduced their revolutionary biographies not just to their actions in 1917, but to the mistakes they had made in October of that year, mistakes to which they had already publicly owned. In so doing, he reduced their core ideological values and their entire lives of revolution to the sum of the errors they had made over a few short weeks. This diminishment of their revolutionary credentials came of course in 1924 when Zinoviev and Kamenev were engaged in a power struggle at the very top of the party. In his analysis of the post-February period, Trotsky made much of Zinoviev's and Kamenev's view in October 1917 that the time for armed insurrection had not yet arrived, a view that conflicted directly with the resolution adopted earlier, at Lenin's urging, by the Central Committee. Worse still, they had gone public with their views in a Social-Democratic newspaper *Novaia zhizn'* [*New Life*] on 18 October. Trotsky made few directly *personal* attacks against these men in his piece. He preferred to damn them more often with Lenin's words, copiously quoting Lenin's criticisms of Kame-

48 Trotsky 1965a, pp. 59–61. For the latest salvo in a century-long debate on this theory, see Day and Gaido 2009; Lih 2012; Day and Gaido 2013; Shandro 2013; Marot 2013; Lih 2013.

nev's 'errors' in particular. He added rather disingenuously that the 'disagreements of 1917' should not be used now as 'weapons to attack those who at that time had gone astray' or had pursued a 'false [*lozhnyi*] policy', although he made sure to add that these disagreements were 'profound and not at all accidental'.⁴⁹ This caveat rang hollow. After all, E.H. Carr pointed out, 'those in the know' would have been aware that this latter phrase was borrowed from Lenin's 'secret' Testament.⁵⁰ Trotsky generally referred to 'Zinoviev and Kamenev' in tandem, insinuating perhaps that as political bedfellows they were part of something larger, organised, and possibly nefarious within the party. As historian Vadim Rogovin put it, 'The facts laid out by Trotsky struck not only at the "troika" but also at many party activists from their immediate circle – [Sergo] Ordzhonikidze, Rykov, [Emel'ian] Iaroslavskii, [Viktor] Nogin, [Sergei] Kirov, and others, who had at that time adopted a similar, semi-Menshevik position'.⁵¹

Trotsky implied that Zinoviev and Kamenev were but the most prominent examples of inconstant trends in the Bolshevik Party in 1917, trends which had grown out of misguided or mistaken conceptions from the pre-revolutionary era. To make his point, he pressed Lenin into service again, noting that Lenin himself had described disagreements revealed by the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (RSDRP) in 1903 as an "anticipation", i.e. foreshadowing' of later disagreements.⁵² By Trotsky's own logic though, these earlier 'mistakes' should surely not have been included in any consideration of Zinoviev's and Kamenev's specifically *revolutionary* credentials. He also criticised others for profoundly misunderstanding Marx's teachings, by wrongly raising to 'an absolute, supra-historical law' Marx's limited idea that 'the backward [*otstalye*] countries' must first be shown the path to revolution by 'the advanced [*peredovye*] countries'. This view brought them dangerously close to the 'pseudo-Marxism [*lzhe-marksizm*]' of the Mensheviks, views which were held 'not only by the Mensheviks and SRs, but also by a certain number of leading figures in our own party'.⁵³ At times, Trotsky deployed a broad and accretive insinuation, criticising *Pravda* for being closer in March 1917 to 'the positions of revolutionary defencism than to the positions of Lenin', and even using the vague but freighted term 'opposition [*oppozitsiia*]' to character-

49 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

50 Carr 1970, p. 17.

51 Rogovin 1992, p. 185.

52 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 96.

53 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 92.

ise those with whom he had had disagreements in the party in 1917.⁵⁴ He backed this up with the master's authority once more, quoting Lenin's criticism of 'Old Bolsheviks' who 'more than once already have played so regrettable a role in the history of our party by reiterating formulas senselessly *learned by rote* instead of *studying* the specific features of the new and living reality'.⁵⁵ In this way Trotsky moved these individuals' 'errors' out of the realm of transient political *faux pas* and into the realm of enduring ideological design. Such individuals, he implied, were out of step with revolutionary time, still stuck perhaps in the old pre-revolutionary 'circles' [*kruzhki*] where they had been able to spend their time engaging in academic navel-gazing on the meaning of Marx and dreaming of once and future revolutions.⁵⁶ There was no place for them in the quickened revolutionary time of 1917, when insurrection was no longer a romantic dream but a real possibility that had to be seized. In contrast to the inconstancy of those individuals, Trotsky argued, Lenin had laid out his earlier revolutionary idea of the 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry', meant as a stage on the path to a socialist dictatorship by the proletariat. In contrast to the 'Menshevik' ditherings of many in the party, Lenin's articulation of the current situation was 'revolutionary and dynamic through and through'.⁵⁷ Trotsky was of course using this term 'Menshevik' here not to describe political affiliation or allegiance but rather a crippling myopia. To be Menshevik was to be at the whim of events, tossed on the seas of fate.

Lenin certainly featured prominently in Trotsky's biography of the revolution, but often in close proximity to Trotsky who boasted of their harmony of thinking throughout 1917: 'of course, I completely and utterly supported Lenin's path to the conquest of power by the proletariat. On the peasantry, I had not a shadow of disagreement with Lenin'.⁵⁸ Praising Lenin's relentless battle in October 1917 against any delay in the planned insurrection in Petrograd, Trotsky wrote: 'If Lenin had not sounded the alarm, without his pressure, his criticism, his intense and passionate revolutionary mistrust, the party would surely have failed to fall into line at the crucial moment, for the opposition in the upper ranks was very strong'.⁵⁹ In his unpublished piece, 'Our Difference', Trotsky also took on the nascent Lenin cult and the tendency of some people now to down-play the Red Terror and Lenin's support for it:

54 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 97, 101.

55 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 94.

56 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 133.

57 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 91.

58 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 136.

59 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 121–122.

There is no reason at all to repudiate our past, to 'cast off' our responsibility for the Red Terror. It is a completely unworthy idea to want to cast off this responsibility – onto Lenin. Who could 'cast off' this responsibility onto him? He has already assumed it. October, overthrow, revolution, Red Terror, Civil War – he has assumed responsibility for all of this in the eyes of the working class and of history, and he will bear it 'for evermore'. Or perhaps we are talking here about overreaching, about excesses? Where exactly have revolutions ever been carried out without 'overreaching' and without excesses? How many times did Lenin explain this simple idea to the philistines who were horrified by the excesses of April, July and October! Nothing and no one can take away Lenin's responsibility for the Red Terror. Not even his overly servile 'defenders'. The Red Terror was a necessary tool of the revolution. It would have failed without it.⁶⁰

To be Bolshevik-Leninist then was to be both ruthlessly in control of events, and to be riding the prevailing currents to history's ultimate destination.

Even where Lenin was concerned, though, Trotsky's praise had its limits. Trotsky criticised him for misreading the revolutionary portents while he was in foreign exile because he was watching 'the revolutionary events through the distorted mirror of the capitalist media'.⁶¹ In hiding in the Gulf of Finland after the abortive July Days, Lenin had failed to appreciate the 'full significance' of Provisional Government President Alexander Kerensky's order transferring the bulk of the Petrograd garrison to the front. His failure to recognise the radical shift in the mood and organisation of the soldiers in Petrograd had led him to counsel launching the insurrection in Moscow first.⁶² Lenin was far-sighted but apparently not infallible. Nor was he above prostituting his ideological principles, Trotsky implied. In 'The Lessons of October' Trotsky seemed to attribute the success of the insurrection, after praising Lenin's steadfast insistence on its timing, to 'political cunning', whereby 'we managed ... to lure our enemies, the conciliationists, into the trap of Soviet legality'. The shift to the collective pronoun here was telling. Making constant references to the upcoming Second Congress of Soviets, Trotsky wrote, provided 'legal cover' for the real political, organisational, and military work going on to seize power.⁶³

Trotsky's redefinition of what constituted the essence of the Bolshevik Party during its most critical phase in 1917 certainly had implications for other party

60 Trotsky, Document 10, pp. 313–314.

61 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 98.

62 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 122.

63 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 123.

leaders and for the party's place in history. In Trotsky's scenario, had the misguided instincts of people like Zinoviev and Kamenev not been outweighed by Lenin's (and his own) political will, the revolutionary moment could well have been squandered. 'The tradition of a revolutionary party', Trotsky warned, 'is built not on evasions, but on critical clarity'.⁶⁴ That clarity depended upon the leaders' ability to see past the 'party crisis' in 1917 that was an 'immutable law ... when passing from preparatory revolutionary activity to the immediate struggle for power'.⁶⁵ The Russian Revolution should not be seen as an 'academic exercise' weighing the various views in the movement before 1917, because the context of 1917 was the crucial factor here: 'This would be like discussing the advantages of different swimming styles, while stubbornly refusing to look at the river in which the swimmers will be practising these styles'.⁶⁶ Trotsky quoted Lenin again: 'It is necessary to keep up not with old formulas, but with the new reality'.⁶⁷ Trotsky depicted the party as in deep schism in 1917, a schism precipitated most perilously by the question of whether to fight for power or not. The answer to that question of power would determine whether an individual was in fact 'Bolshevik' or 'Social-Democratic', in control of events or at their whim:

This in itself shows that we were faced not with occasional differences of opinions, but with two tendencies based on fundamental matters of principle. One of these tendencies, the main one, was proletarian and led to the path of world revolution; the other was 'democratic', petty-bourgeois, and ultimately subordinated proletarian politics to the demands of a reformist bourgeois society. These two tendencies clashed bitterly over all issues of any substance throughout 1917.⁶⁸

In Trotsky's view, his representation of the party in 1917 had implications far beyond the discrete fate of Soviet Russia. It had 'direct significance for the politics of the Communist International as a whole'.⁶⁹ His decision in 1924 to draw these 'lessons' from October was inspired in part by the debacle of the defeats in Bulgaria and Germany in 1923. Trotsky was clearly animated by his deep belief in the need for revolution on an international scale. The abortive

64 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 133.

65 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 89.

66 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 90.

67 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 94.

68 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 95.

69 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 133.

revolutions in Bulgaria in the previous year had failed, he believed, because the Bulgarian Communist Party (БКР) had been, firstly, so doctrinaire that it had missed the moment, and secondly, too poorly prepared to practise the art of insurrection. Germany then repeated the Bulgarian party's earlier mistake but even more egregiously. Revolution would continue to fail in other countries, he argued, if the revolutionaries had everything in place for a revolution 'with the exception of a far-sighted and resolute party leadership that understands the laws and methods of revolution'.⁷⁰ He went even further, provocatively stating that an insurrection absent such conditions was impossible because 'the proletariat cannot seize power by means of a spontaneous insurrection'.⁷¹ The Communist parties of Bulgaria and Germany had certainly 'let slip a highly propitious moment for revolutionary action' through their lack of readiness to seize power at the critical moment. But he also added that the Bolshevik Party in Soviet Russia needed to shoulder its share of the blame, because its ignorance of its own path to revolution in October 1917 meant that it had failed to provide a clear enough model for foreign Communists to follow: 'We are not clear in our own minds what we accomplished and how we accomplished it'.⁷²

The Party Response to Trotsky's Challenge

A Komsomol statement cavalierly dismissed Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October' as little more than 'a bitter polemic against two comrades who occupy positions of leadership in our party'.⁷³ The ambitious intent of the 'literary discussion' belied this assertion. It was a concerted effort to dismantle, step by step, Trotsky's arguments. It was either a cacophony or a symphony of voices, depending on one's point of view. Those who took part in the 'discussion' narrated a biography of the revolution that meticulously refuted every aspect of Trotsky's narrative. In that sense then, the counter-narrative they offered was profoundly shaped – indeed defined – by Trotsky's narrative.

Trotsky's reduction of revolutionary chronology to the year 1917 proved particularly influential in shaping the contours of the 'discussion'. This foreshortened chronology, which allowed Trotsky to focus on the recent mistakes of his political rivals, was attacked as wrongheaded from the outset because, as the Komsomol statement put it, 'October is inseparably linked with the entire

70 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 88.

71 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

72 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

73 Komsomol, Document 4, p. 166.

preceding and subsequent history of the party'.⁷⁴ His detractors expanded the revolutionary chronology again, so that mistakes made long before the revolution regained their relevance for the current controversy. In a sense, then, Trotsky's focus on the recent political 'mistakes' of his adversaries ensured that his adversaries would focus on Trotsky's 'history' of errors. Early in his piece, Zinoviev pointed out in response to Trotsky's criticisms that he had already offered his own public *mea culpa* about the 'greatest mistake of my life' in a speech to the Fourth World Congress of the Comintern in 1922.⁷⁵ Neither he nor Kamenev denied their sharp disagreements with Lenin in 1917, nor were they silent about Lenin's unambiguous condemnation of their vacillations at the time. Zinoviev even promised to explain his errors in more detail in forthcoming publications.⁷⁶ Kamenev protested, perhaps a little too much, that his and Zinoviev's mistakes in October 1917 had been 'corrected' by the 'proletarian mass movement' anyway and had thus been rendered politically inconsequential.⁷⁷ Zinoviev, however, unwittingly conceded a major part of Trotsky's argument regarding genuine revolutionary credentials: 'I did in fact commit a major error at the start of November 1917. This mistake, it is true, was recognised and rectified by me after a few days. But as these were *not ordinary days but critical ones*, the error was extremely dangerous.'⁷⁸ Stalin made no such admissions of personal error and declared that 'the mistakes committed by Kamenev and Zinoviev in October are quite irrelevant here', although neither Zinoviev nor Kamenev would have mistaken this for magnanimity on Stalin's part in late 1924.⁷⁹

It is hard to imagine Zinoviev or Kamenev finding anything to welcome in the recurrent mentions of their errors by their comrades throughout the 'discussion', even when these mentions stressed the 'transient' nature of their mistakes or the long years of 'work and service' by these otherwise true Leninists before and after October.⁸⁰ Rather, they tried to spread or deflect the blame. Kamenev made sure to point out that he was but one of a number of Bolsheviks, including Zinoviev, Rykov, Nogin, whom Trotsky had impugned for committing major 'mistakes' at a critical moment. He implied deviousness on Trotsky's part for waiting until now to play this 'trump card in his struggle against Bolshevism',

74 Komsomol, Document 4, p. 167.

75 Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 324.

76 Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 323.

77 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 250.

78 Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 322 [my emphasis].

79 Stalin, Document 9, p. 264.

80 Komsomol, Document 4, p. 165; Bukharin, Document 3, p. 152n9.

even though he had had it for years. For Trotsky to play this card now, Kamenev said, was less an attack on individual Bolsheviks than on Bolshevism itself, after the failure of his attempts since 1917 to supplant Leninism with Trotskyism. He adroitly turned the tables on Trotsky. In 'The Lessons of October', he said, Trotsky was not really focussed on him and Zinoviev, but was really using their names 'to beat Lenin'.⁸¹

Trotsky's 'mistakes', it was implied in the 'discussion', were beyond redemption, and had to be exposed publicly. Several Komsomol members focussed on Trotsky's 'great error' during Brest-Litovsk, on the issue of trade unions, and on his role as 'the leader of the petty-bourgeois, anti-Leninist opposition inside the RKP' in late 1923.⁸² Stalin disputed Trotsky's recollections of 1917, pointing out that as the individual responsible for taking the minutes at key CC meetings in October pertaining to the insurrection, he, Stalin, had been an eyewitness to history. 'The facts', he said, showed that there was no majority in the CC against the uprising, that the CC was not close to a split on this issue, that there was no 'right wing' within the party. Moreover, he added, Kamenev and Zinoviev, after opposing the vote on insurrection, had been elected to the body that was to direct the uprising. He then went on to dispute that Trotsky had even played a 'special role' in the October uprising.⁸³ Kamenev recast Trotsky's pre-revolutionary biography from 1903 onwards as the sum of his errors, as that of an 'agent of Menshevism within the working class'.⁸⁴ Trotsky, snipped Zinoviev, was 'less qualified than anyone' to speak about their [Old Bolsheviks'] mistakes.⁸⁵ Not surprisingly then, Zinoviev and Kamenev were animated by Trotsky's attacks on them. The 'literary discussion' though was by no stretch of the imagination the party's defence of the erstwhile errors of these comrades. Indeed, the 'discussion' was about censure rather than defence, and its most uncompromising condemnations came against Trotsky's representations in 'The Lessons of October' of the place of Lenin, of the party, and of the Comintern in recent revolutionary politics.

Notwithstanding Kun's derisory comment that Mensheviks like Iulii Martov used 'their whole baggage of quotations' in their struggle against the Bolsheviks, the 'discussion' quoted Lenin with almost papal authority at every turn, as, to be sure, did Trotsky.⁸⁶ Indeed, Molotov quoted approvingly from Trotsky's recent

81 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 236.

82 Komsomol, Document 4, p. 167.

83 Stalin, Document 9, p. 262.

84 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 202.

85 Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 323.

86 Kun, Document 28, p. 624.

work on Lenin, in which Trotsky had written that '*Marx was a prophet with the Tables of the Law; Lenin was the executor of the Commandments*'.⁸⁷ Still, Trotsky's representation of a heroic but fallible Lenin drew concentrated fire from his critics. Sokol'nikov accused Trotsky of diminishing Lenin's role throughout 1917, of implying that Lenin's early interest in launching the insurrection in Moscow first had almost torpedoed the revolution, and of constantly inflating Lenin's various criticisms of his comrades into a perennial 'crisis in the party' or a major schism between Lenin and the CC.⁸⁸ On the former point, Piontkovskii argued that Lenin's idea of starting the insurrection in Moscow first was only part of a plan, not a 'categorical demand', and the plan 'not only did not exclude the possibility of action in Petrograd but indicated precisely how to carry out this action in Petrograd'.⁸⁹ He would have agreed with Molotov's admonition that Trotsky needed to study Lenin more closely: 'Almost nowhere in his book does Trotsky address the question of the significance of Lenin's theoretical works'.⁹⁰ Kamenev rejected Trotsky's assertion that Lenin had languished out-of-touch in the underground while he, Trotsky, had essentially already arranged the 'victorious insurrection' by 9 October, or that what actually happened on 25 October were merely 'several *supplementary* steps in order to hand the proletariat an intelligently and subtly prepared victory'.⁹¹ Trotsky's earlier book, *Lenin. Notes for a Biographer*, published in mid-1924, had already irritated prominent Bolsheviks for its author's tendency to array himself alongside Lenin at seminal moments in the revolutionary action. This book about Lenin, Molotov wryly noted, was really about Trotsky.⁹² In fact, the 'discussion' argued, at every turn over the past two decades Lenin had been a relentless critic of Trotsky. Kamenev, for one, supplied a catalogue of quotations from Lenin critical of Trotsky from the *Iskra* days, through the split at the Second Congress of the party in 1903, and from the 'doldrums' in the aftermath of the failed 1905 Revolution until early 1917. Throughout that period, Kamenev noted, Lenin's works addressed 'the question of Trotskyism' repeatedly and systematically, and he lingered on Lenin's description of Trotsky's philosophy of history as 'sectarianism, intellectualist individualism, ideological fetishism'. Lenin, he added, resumed his criticism in early 1918, after 'a brief interruption' in 1917. There had, then, been nothing 'accidental' about this; Trotsky had been

87 Molotov, Document 13, p. 393 [Molotov's emphasis].

88 Sokol'nikov, Document 6, p. 182.

89 Piontkovskii, Document 26, p. 606.

90 Molotov, Document 13, p. 393.

91 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 255 [my emphasis].

92 Molotov, Document 13, p. 388.

an 'agent of Menshevism' for the past fifteen years.⁹³ That 'brief interruption', he implied, facilitated Trotsky's foreshortened revolutionary chronology, because at all other times Lenin had maintained a constant criticism of his activities. For good measure he added an example of self-incrimination from Trotsky's own pen, as when Trotsky referred to the 'Leninists' as a 'clique of intellectuals' from which the proletariat had to be saved.⁹⁴

Trotsky's claims of a long and close meeting of philosophical minds with Lenin, even if they disagreed politically at times, were dealt a significant blow with the in no way coincidental publication of a letter in *Pravda* on 9 December 1924. In 1913, in exile in Vienna, Trotsky had sent N.S. Chkheidze, chair of the SD fraction of the Fourth Duma in St. Petersburg, a letter that was sharply critical of Lenin. 'That old hand Lenin', he wrote, 'that professional exploiter of all that is backward in the labour movement' was responsible for cynically attempting to split the Russian Social Democratic party. He accused Lenin of using 'unity' in the banner of the new daily workers' newspaper, *Pravda*, merely in order to turn it into a lever for 'circle intrigues and unprincipled splitting'. Lenin was toying with his readers by talking about 'unity from below while engineering a split from above'. 'The entire edifice of Leninism', Trotsky wrote in unmistakable terms, 'is built on lies and falsification and contains the poisonous seeds of its own destruction'.⁹⁵ Stalin, Safarov, and Kun all picked up on this letter as a clear self-incrimination by Trotsky.⁹⁶ Trotsky felt a need to refer to it in his unpublished piece as well.⁹⁷ He may have thought this letter long-gone, but it had resurfaced in late 1921 in the police archives, and Ol'minskii wrote to Trotsky about the possibility of publishing it. In December 1921, Trotsky had advised against its publication because 'the time for history has not yet come' and readers would not understand the tone of such correspondence at a time when there were 'scarcely two old émigrés in the party who did not sharply rebuke each other in their correspondence under the influence of an ideological dispute, a passing grievance, and so on'. He also expressed his reluctance to write an explanatory preface for the letter for fear of stoking factional strife, for, he wrote forthrightly, 'I in no way believe that I was wrong about everything in my disagreements with the Bolsheviks'.⁹⁸ For many, this was *prima facie* evidence of his overweening arrogance. Trotsky's letter to Ol'minskii, with an

93 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 201, 212, 202.

94 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 212.

95 The Chkheidze Controversy, Document 14, pp. 421–2.

96 Stalin, Document 9, p. 276; Safarov, Document 19, p. 501; Kun, Document 28, pp. 619–20.

97 Trotsky, Document 10, p. 285.

98 The Chkheidze Controversy, Document 14, pp. 423–4.

appended response from Ol'minskii, was published in *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* on 9 and 10 December 1924 respectively.⁹⁹ The following day in these newspapers, Kamenev thanked Ol'minskii for doing the party a service by publishing the letter. He made special note of Trotsky's condemnation of Lenin and his refusal to countenance the possibility of having been wrong in his past disagreements with the Bolsheviks. Kamenev also expressed his belief that the letter would remove any lingering 'doubts and vacillations' among party members about the correctness or the tenor of the party's stance on Trotsky in the 'literary discussion'.¹⁰⁰

Having worked hard to remove Trotsky from Lenin's political and ideological proximity, the 'discussion' also sought to excise the parvenu from his recent new home of the Bolshevik Party. Trotsky's depiction of the Bolshevik Party before but especially during 1917 provided his enemies with plenty of ammunition. Stepanov accused Trotsky of seeing the party 'as a small sect, a circle of conspirators, a little group of adventurers' led by a 'great adventurer and master of rhetoric', rather than as the 'vanguard of the world proletariat' led by an 'ingenious strategist and tactician'. The fact that Trotsky had not taken part in the pre-revolutionary campaigns of the Bolshevik Party caused him to focus only on the actions of individuals, Stepanov wrote, rather than on the 'progressive movement' of the masses and the 'leadership activity of Lenin and the Leninist party'.¹⁰¹ For the participants in the 'discussion', Trotsky's sin against the party was his gravest, perhaps even worse than his self-serving picture of his past relationship with Lenin. Bukharin chided him for his reduction of the party to its internecine struggles at the top, arguing that in 'The Lessons of October' the party 'does not exist, its mood cannot be felt, it has disappeared. Trotsky is there, and Lenin is visible in the distance, and there is some kind of dim-witted, nameless CC'. He derided Trotsky's description of a party torn to pieces by disagreements between April and October 1917 until 'they exploded into a conflict that almost caused a collapse'.¹⁰² The Komsomol statement faulted 'The Lessons of October' as a continuation of the 'mistakes and distortions' about the party's struggle that Trotsky had already made in his earlier works. It criticised him for relegating everything in the party to the conduct of 'individual leaders' and their 'mistakes' while pushing Lenin into the background, from where he could only give 'counsel from afar and not without errors':

99 The Chkheidze Controversy, Document 14, pp. 423–26.

100 L. Kamenev, 'Byl li Lenin deistvitel'no vozhdem proletariata v revoliutsii?', *Pravda*, no. 281, 10 December 1924, p. 2; and *Izvestiia*, no. 282, 10 December 1924, p. 2.

101 Stepanov, Document 2, p. 141.

102 Bukharin, Document 3, p. 152.

The Bolshevik Party, the leader of the October overthrow, is absent from the picture drawn by comrade Trotsky. Where is the Central Committee which led the struggle against Kornilov and which prepared and organised the insurrection? Where is the Petersburg Committee? Where are the districts of Petrograd, the propaganda, organisational, and fighting work in the factories and plants, in the military units? Where is the Moscow organisation? Where are the party masses which united around Lenin and supported his political line without a shadow of a doubt or a hint of vacillation?¹⁰³

Sokol'nikov stated that Trotsky had built his 'study of October' around 'the mistakes of a few Bolsheviks', in order to suggest that there were really 'two parties within the party'. He called instead for a 'real world' portrait of the party in which Lenin, the CC, and Bolshevik cadres manoeuvred under difficult conditions, sometimes making mistakes (Lenin included, although his "mistakes" were of a special kind'). They felt their way, some were left behind, others rushed on too far ahead. At the crucial moments however, 'the front always dressed ranks in short order'.¹⁰⁴

The general discomfort in the 'literary discussion' with Trotsky's picture of the party as the sum of its internal disagreements derived in part from two decades of Bolshevik caricatures of opposing political groups, and especially the Mensheviks, as precisely that. For their very idea of the ideal party, in contrast to Lenin's 'party of a new type', was, as Kamenev put it, 'a collection of groups and tendencies'.¹⁰⁵ Nobody should draw 'the monstrous conclusion', went one review of Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October', that

these or those members of the party represent a 'right wing', 'social-democratic tendencies', 'opportunism', and other mortal sins of the Second International. Moreover, in comrade Trotsky's interpretation, Lenin was apparently surrounded by opportunists and the entire time our party tolerated malicious and incorrigible Mensheviks inside the Central Committee, who constantly put their sticks into the spokes at every 'strategic turn', to use comrade Trotsky's fanciful term.¹⁰⁶

103 Komsomol, Document 4, p. 164.

104 Sokol'nikov, Document 6, p. 186.

105 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 248.

106 F. Raskol'nikov, 'Retseziia Trotskogo', *Krasnaia nov'*, no. 7-8, 1924, p. 396.

Kamenev, Zinoviev, and others echoed this sentiment. The point, as Zinoviev said, was that no such 'right wing' had existed in the party at that time, and Trotsky was now attempting to create one in 1924, and he was targeting both the RKP(b) and the Comintern.¹⁰⁷ Stepanov offered his own picture of a party united, steadily purging itself of hostile elements throughout the decade before the revolution, and led by a man who 'does not pontificate, does not order, does not command, but persuades'. This occurred despite those in the party 'who had previously directed their energies in a struggle against it and ... pursued tactics which were a complete rejection of Leninist tactics'. 'No one will forget this', he warned.¹⁰⁸

Finally, Trotsky's withering criticism in 'The Lessons of October' of the recent revolutionary failings on the international stage, and of the Bolshevik Party's share of the blame, touched a raw nerve in the party, and became a focus of criticism in the 'discussion'. Zinoviev, as head of the Comintern, condemned in unequivocal terms Trotsky's assignment of any blame to the RKP(b) and the Comintern for the debacles in Bulgaria and Germany in 1923. Zinoviev accused Trotsky of hypocrisy on this issue. He pointed out that in January 1924 Trotsky had argued that if the KPD had joined the insurrection in Germany in October 1923, it would now be 'a heap of ruins', yet in his later 'The Lessons of October' he accused the Comintern of letting a chance of revolution slip through its fingers.¹⁰⁹ Kamenev asked sarcastically why 'our textbooks' for foreign Communists do not say: 'Comrades! We teach you Bolshevism, but remember that Bolshevism contains anti-revolutionary features; when the fighting begins, then you will not be able to manage with the weapon of Bolshevism. You will have to replace it with another, the weapon of Trotskyism'.¹¹⁰

Individual foreign Communists picked up the mantle on this particular aspect of Trotsky's 'biography' of October. Kolarov endorsed Trotsky's call for a history of the party and revolution, and even praised some of Trotsky's earlier work for being 'thoroughly saturated with Bolshevik thinking'. He added though that 'The Lessons of October' could in no way serve as a guide for foreign Communist parties wanting to learn from the October Revolution: 'To the cause of the revolutionary construction of the Comintern, i.e. the creation of genuine Bolshevik parties, capable of organising victory in the struggle of the proletariat for power, *The Lessons of October* brings only vacillation, unease, and bewilderment'. He defended the Comintern against Trotsky's accusation that it

107 Zinoviev, Document 11, pp. 346–56.

108 Stepanov, Document 2, p. 145.

109 Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 358, 345n42.

110 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 233.

had undertaken no serious study of the Bulgarian experience. The event, he wrote, had in fact been discussed at several international Communist conferences.¹¹¹ Kolarov criticised Trotsky for sowing broad mistrust of the РКР(б) and its leaders, adding that this was not a good lesson for the younger members of foreign Communist parties. He praised the Bolshevik Party as the inspiration for the Bulgarian Communist Party's (БКР) move away from the vestiges of Social-Democratic thinking to a proletarian insurrectionist mentality. He also explicitly disputed Trotsky's assertion of Bolshevik culpability in the Bulgarian failure. The critical mistake in the June affair was made when the CC of the БКР failed to learn the seminal lesson of October, namely 'the role of the party as the revolutionary vanguard'. Kolarov also disputed Trotsky's argument that in September 1923 the CC of the БКР then overcompensated for its earlier error and rushed, inadequately prepared, into the September defeat. It was in fact, he wrote, nothing less than a 'bloody provocation' by the 'White Guard government' designed to finish off an injured Communist movement in Bulgaria.¹¹² The Bulgarian CC, he concluded, was therefore thinking of naked survival rather than not repeating earlier mistakes.

The level of economic and political development in Germany – and its theoretical ripeness for revolution – ensured that the failed revolution there would garner even more attention in the 'literary discussion' from the foreign Communists, notably Kuusinen and Kun. Kuusinen took on Trotsky's accusation that the Comintern, and Zinoviev in particular (although Trotsky had not mentioned him by name, as Kuusinen helpfully pointed out), had failed the КРД by not ensuring that 'better people' were in its CC, people who would not retreat in the face of the revolutionary moment. Kuusinen made clear what he thought of Trotsky's immediate political goal, noting sardonically that in Trotsky's analysis of the German failure 'the unnamed, guilty Germans appear only in secondary roles'. He also specifically criticised Trotsky's efforts in late 1923 to pin the German comrades down to a specific date for the insurrection as 'a narrowly organisational and rather un-Marxist approach to the matter', and he called Trotsky's published belief that all the preconditions for revolution were in place in Germany at that time 'a fantastic exaggeration'.¹¹³ Kun identified moments when Trotsky's misinterpretation or underestimation of key events in recent German history contributed to his misreading of the German October. These included the Belgian and French occupation of the Ruhr industrial region in January 1923

111 Kolarov, Document 17, p. 465.

112 Kolarov, Document 17, p. 474.

113 Kuusinen, Document 12, p. 368, 377, 378.

over the German default on reparations payments and the spreading popular dissatisfaction with the government of Wilhelm Cuno.¹¹⁴ After offering his own detailed analysis of the course of events in October 1923 in Germany, Kuusinen got down to the real point of his piece, namely his indictment of Trotsky:

In his politics he always represents so to speak two different 'types'. One is with the rightist trend, the other with the leftist. The superficial observer might get the impression that he is constantly vacillating from one to the other, his own kind of 'permanent revolution'. But this only appears to be the case. Comrade Trotsky does not vacillate. He usually adopts a definite, but wrong, course. The reality is this: in his actions he tends towards the right, but he describes these actions in leftist, very leftist, terms. The rightist type is the man of action who says little, does not publicise it much, and gets on with his work. The leftist type is susceptible to public speeches, talks a lot, does not do much work, but ... describes it. *But the descriptions given by the leftist type differ completely from the work actually done by the rightist type.*

Kuusinen concluded with a pithy scriptural reference: 'As the Bible says: the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing'.¹¹⁵

At an essential level, however, the 'literary discussion' transcended even these very immediate political concerns over Lenin, the party, and the International. It was also a battle for the manner in which Russia's revolutionary experience would be recorded for posterity. Indeed it was about the very claims being made on posterity in the name of that experience. Those involved in the 'discussion' were concerned about what they saw as the poisonous effect of Trotsky's recent history both on the youth in their own party and on the future of foreign Communist parties. This was clearly on Zinoviev's mind when he spoke about the need for the 'bolshevisation of our own ranks' because the youth of the party had not had the chance to 'attend the school of Leninism'.¹¹⁶ The criticisms though went deeper than individual political 'mistakes' committed by Trotsky over the course of a long political career. There was a strong sense in the 'discussion' that history itself was at stake in late 1924. It was after all one of Trotsky's *raisons d'être* for writing 'The Lessons of October'. Trotsky had imagined how history would have been written if the decision to shy away from

¹¹⁴ Kun, Document 28, pp. 639–40.

¹¹⁵ Kuusinen, Document 12, pp. 382–383 [Kuusinen's emphasis].

¹¹⁶ Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 363.

political insurrection had prevailed in the CC: 'The officious historians would of course have portrayed the insurrection in October 1917 as the purest madness, and they would have furnished the reader with stunning sets of statistics on junkers, Cossacks, shock troops, artillery deployed in a fan, and soldiers returning from the front'.¹¹⁷

None of the participants in the 'literary discussion' could have found much to dispute in Trotsky's assertion that the October Revolution had not yet found its historian, and that it even lacked an adequate evidentiary base, thanks to the party's negligence in this realm since 1917. All of them, though, disputed the legitimacy of Trotsky's arrogation of the role of party historian. Kamenev noted that every individual had to choose what to learn and what to teach, 'either this history of Trotsky's, or the history as it is presented in the works of comrade Lenin'.¹¹⁸ He did not, of course, mean this as a genuine choice. Trotsky's adversaries in the 'discussion' argued that his mistakes derived from fundamentally misguided or criminally destructive theoretical and ideological principles that were particularly out-of-touch today. He was not only out-of-step *politically*, they opined, he was out-of-step *historically*. Stalin contrasted Trotsky's 'Arabian Nights' fairy tales about October against 'the facts', the 'truth'. Trotsky's analysis, he said, had helped prolong the 'absurd rumours' and 'legends' about the October Revolution, some of which had been enshrined in Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World*.¹¹⁹ Interestingly, Krupskaya noted her husband's strong defence of the book, and added that while it surely contained 'inaccuracies, legends', it was still valuable because it allowed young Communists to grasp 'the spirit of the revolution more quickly and deeply ... than from perusing dozens of resolutions and protocols'.¹²⁰ Many more pieces, however, including those by Bukharin, Lebed', Kuusinen, Andrei Andreev, and Bubnov, were devoted explicitly to exposing the ways in which Trotsky's representation did not measure up to the 'facts'.¹²¹

At every step in the discussion, Trotsky's personal, political, and intellectual integrity came under relentless attack. His theory of permanent revolution was singled out for special acrimony, notwithstanding his silence on it in 'The Lessons of October', a measure perhaps of the vulnerability he felt on the issue of the peasantry in the revolution. Kun argued that the permanent revolution was

117 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 114.

118 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 255.

119 Stalin, Document 9, p. 261.

120 Krupskaya, Document 15, p. 430.

121 Bukharin, Document 3; Kuusinen, Document 12; Andreev, Document 23; Bubnov, Document 29.

essentially Trotsky's argument for how the revolution should have proceeded rather than how it actually did, and that it had been proven wrong on a number of counts. Trotsky had mistrusted the peasantry and put his revolutionary faith in the proletariat alone, rather than work towards the armed and economic 'alliance of the working class and the peasantry' as Lenin had done, thereby assuring the success of the revolution. Trotsky, continued Kun, believed that the *sine qua non* of the success of Russia's revolution was international proletarian revolution rather than the ability of the Russian proletariat to hold on to power. Lest anyone think that Trotsky's theory was a product of an earlier time and ought not to be used to criticise him today, Kun pointed out Trotsky's renewed commitment to it in his recently published *The New Course*.¹²² Bukharin delivered an extended analysis of the theory at a meeting of propagandists in Moscow in mid-December, informing the assembled that Trotsky in fact believed that his theory had been borne out by the course of the October Revolution, and that the revolution had succeeded only because in 1917 the party had been 're-baptised with the sign of the permanent revolution'. Bukharin's summary was most damning. In Trotsky's view, he wrote, 'the essence of Leninism ... is the theory of permanent revolution'.¹²³ Safarov offered that Trotsky's rejection of "national" revolution in Russia' on the basis of his theory of permanent revolution had dragged him 'into the Kautskyian swamp'.¹²⁴

Many of Trotsky's critics saw only arrogance and self-aggrandisement in his criticisms of Bolshevik beliefs and actions in the run-up to the October Revolution. From Trotsky's *1905*, first published in 1908 but revised for republication in 1922, Kamenev quoted Trotsky's accusation that Bolshevism contained 'anti-revolutionary aspects' which could have been a grave threat in the event of the victory of the revolution, because the Bolsheviks, like the Mensheviks, according to Trotsky, feared the 'consequences of the class struggle'.¹²⁵ Kamenev pointed to Trotsky's claim that this had not happened because the Bolsheviks had changed their political line before the seizure of power. As Kamenev sarcastically observed, Trotsky believed himself to have been the cause of that change because his pressure forced 'Lenin and Bolshevism in the spring of 1917 ... to "re-arm themselves", i.e. exchange the counter-revolutionary weapons of Bolshevism with the genuinely revolutionary weapons already procured by

¹²² Kun, Document 28, p. 621.

¹²³ Bukharin, Document 20, p. 524 [Bukharin's emphasis].

¹²⁴ Safarov, Document 19, p. 511.

¹²⁵ Kamenev, Document 8, p. 231.

Trotsky twelve years earlier. In this sense the revolution erased any disagreements.¹²⁶ Kamenev added that when Trotsky joined the party and served it loyally, 'thereby writing a glorious page in his own biography and in the history of the party', he and his fellow Bolsheviks had chosen not to dwell on all of these earlier problems. They were prompted to return to them only when Trotsky began 'to falsify the history and the ideas of Bolshevism, when he tries to expropriate the ideological heritage of the party, when he endeavours to supplant Leninism with Trotskyism as the ideology of the Russian and international proletariat, then he himself forces us to ask these questions'.¹²⁷ This was nothing less than 'the history of our party according to Trotsky'.¹²⁸

Stepanov cautioned, without irony, that ideological blinders inevitably produced misleading or baldly fallacious representations of past events, in short, wrong histories. He contrasted 'real history' against recent efforts by 'Black Hundred-Kadet bastards', 'Right Menshevik and Right SR lackeys and hirelings', and even by liberals and 'almost Bolsheviks', to misrepresent the revolutionary events of 1905 and 1917. The real target of these epithets would have been clear to all at the time. These "'historical" writings', he warned, were but 'nimble self-representations of the authors'. They had been far too eager with their obituaries to 1905 and their identification of Bolshevik 'anarcho-maximalism' as the prime cause of its failure. When these obituaries were written, he added, the Bolsheviks, muzzled by censors and barred from publishing houses, had been unable to respond. Now, the Bolsheviks needed to be far more active in their efforts to provide a 'sufficiently broad Bolshevik exposition' not only of the events of 1917 but also of 1905 as the twentieth anniversary of that event approached.¹²⁹ It was not sufficient in the 'discussion', though, to question the content of Trotsky's theoretical assumptions. Their very provenance had also to be questioned. The permanent revolution, wrote Kun, had been drawn up 'in collaboration with [Izrail'] Parvus, or rather Parvus with Trotsky'. He later referred to Parvus as the 'father of the permanent revolution' and provided quotations from Parvus in support of his claim.¹³⁰ Bukharin also referred, and not in a positive sense, to the 'Trotsky-Parvus group' of 1905.¹³¹ As Kamenev sarcastically put it, Trotsky expressed 'in his own words Parvus's idea of the

126 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 232.

127 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 221.

128 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 233.

129 Stepanov, Document 2, p. 139, 140.

130 Kun, Document 28, p. 630, 632n19.

131 Bukharin, Document 3, p. 158.

“permanent revolution”.¹³² Kun pushed the insult even further, declaring that key slogans long identified with Trotsky since 1905, and even his ideas on trade unions in the discussion of 1920–1, had in fact come from his partner.¹³³ Safarov piled on with the claim that other parts of Trotsky’s political philosophy were mercenary adaptations of the ideas of others. He was guilty of ‘embroidering faint-hearted and cowardly Kautskyianism with “leftist” phrases’, and of ‘having taken the fight for freedom of coalition from the liquidationists’.¹³⁴ Piontkovskii even doubted the accuracy of some of Trotsky’s pieces, given that they had started out as speeches at venues where notes had not been taken, and he found the ‘scholarly apparatus’ provided in Trotsky’s *Works* to be wanting and manipulative.¹³⁵

At root of much of the criticism of Trotsky in the ‘literary discussion’ was that he had always been too enamoured with the ‘academic’, Sokol’nikov for example contrasting Trotsky’s ‘research’ with ‘the real world’ in which ‘everything is different’.¹³⁶ In ‘The Lessons of October’, Trotsky had argued that 1917 was the only revolutionary period that mattered, and to consider now all those differing viewpoints that had existed about revolution prior to 1917 would be a ‘fruitless, academic exercise’ and an ‘academic parody of Marxism’.¹³⁷ Here again, the critics turned Trotsky’s own criticisms against him. Sokol’nikov implied that the complexities of achieving the struggle in the real world demanded all kinds of feints, ‘detours’, and manœuvres. The complexities could be ignored only by those ‘who imagine that in politics, as in geometry, a straight line is the shortest distance between two points’.¹³⁸ Molotov put it slightly differently. Trotsky was hampered by a tendency to spoil himself with too much theoretical navel-gazing: ‘it means he is moving not forward, but backward, getting more and more tangled up in the luxurious clothing of his own political contradictions’.¹³⁹ Trotsky, the ‘literary discussion’ implied, may have been right politically at times in his revolutionary career, but he had always been wrong ideologically, tactically, even epistemologically.

132 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 204.

133 Kun, Document 28, p. 632n19.

134 Safarov, Document 19, p. 502, 512.

135 Piontkovskii, Document 26, p. 604.

136 Sokol’nikov, Document 6, p. 186.

137 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 90, 91.

138 Sokol’nikov, Document 6, p. 186.

139 Molotov, Document 13, p. 410.

The 'Literary Discussion' and the Reinvention of 'Trotskyism'

The 'literary discussion' was more than the sum of its parts. It sought to diminish Trotsky in increments, to hollow out the man and his ideas in order to delegitimise and disarm him, to destroy him existentially. In 'The Lessons of October', Trotsky had used the term 'opposition' to imply that the leaders' mistakes had been guided by some coherent, perhaps organised, design. The 'literary discussion' did much the same with the terms 'Trotskyism' and 'Trotskyist'. Both terms had been in use prior to the 'discussion', although inflected with a range of meanings. Long before the revolution, the Kadet leader Pavel Miliukov had used the term 'Trotskyist' to characterise the 'extremist slogans' used by Trotsky and Parvus in the moderate socialist press.¹⁴⁰ In an article in 1911, Lenin had used the term to denote an anti-party tendency, tying the term very firmly to the personal actions and invidious design of Trotsky:

Trotsky and the 'Trotskyites and conciliators' like him are more pernicious than any liquidator; the convinced liquidators state their views bluntly, and it is easy for the workers to detect where they are wrong, whereas the Trotskys *deceive* the workers, *cover up* the evil, and make it impossible to expose the evil and to remedy it. Whoever supports Trotsky's puny group supports a policy of lying and of deceiving the workers, a policy of shielding the liquidators.¹⁴¹

After the October Revolution, however, Lenin eschewed the term 'Trotskyism' in his criticisms of Trotsky.¹⁴² Zinoviev used the term twice in a report on 15 December 1923 to a meeting of the Bureau of the Collectives [*Biuro kollektivov*] of the Petrograd organisation of the party. Discussing, among other things, the changing makeup of the party and the danger of factions and groupings in it, he called 'Trotskyism' (he placed the word in quotation marks) a 'definite tendency' in the Russian labour movement and he ominously proceeded to trace the genesis of Trotskyism from the first years of the century.¹⁴³

The 'discussion' sought to redefine the term sharply. Rykov drew largely on Trotsky's earlier *The New Course* to portray his many conflicts with comrades and party as 'but individual battles in a general campaign by Trotsky-

¹⁴⁰ Vasetskii 1992, p. 57.

¹⁴¹ Lenin 1963a, p. 243.

¹⁴² Potashev 1992, p. 8.

¹⁴³ 'O bor'be za partiiu', *Pravda*, no. 290, 21 December 1923, p. 4.

ism to remove Bolshevik ideology from the Bolshevik Party'.¹⁴⁴ Kamenev asked whether the term 'Trotskyism' referred to

comrade Trotsky's personality, or to general, impersonal phenomena in the history of the labour movement over the past twenty years in Russia? What are we dealing with here – with a personality, with individualism, or with some generalised phenomenon, some trend caused by the general conditions of development of the labour movement in a petty-bourgeois country? Are we dealing with an accidental phenomenon or with a phenomenon with a history behind it, which we must not forget?¹⁴⁵

Kamenev was arguing that Bolshevism was forged not only in constant battle with Menshevism but also with Trotskyism, which he called the 'agent' or 'mask' for Menshevism.¹⁴⁶ Those who took part in the 'literary discussion' sought to ensure that this battle could not be dismissed as a petty squabble among individuals. Kun explicitly rejected the notion that the clash between Trotskyism and Leninism could be reduced to the political or psychological idiosyncrasies of personalities.¹⁴⁷

The term 'Trotskyism', then, had to evoke a sense of coherence and threat, a distinct political system. It had necessarily to be an '-ism', although the 'literary discussion' of 1924 was not a forum for the *competition* of ideologies. In reality, the 'discussion' was about delineating the politically sacred and the politically profane in late 1924. Kamenev conveyed the *ne plus ultra* of this process with his sarcastic observation that the party cannot teach Leninism 'in toto, without corrections, as a theory and practice of world revolution, and at the same time hint that the theory and practice of proletarian revolution is actually rooted not in Leninism but in ideas generated by Trotsky "between January 9 and the October strike of 1905". (What attention to the date of birth of one's own ideas! What attention to one's own biography!)'. 'A choice must be made', he added, a convention without substance that was employed frequently in the 'discussion'. It was no surprise that he proposed teaching 'Bolshevism, Leninism lock, stock and barrel, without corrections, as the true theory of proletarian revolution'.¹⁴⁸ So out of Trotsky's original call for the party to study the history of October had

144 Rykov, Document 22, p. 575.

145 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 201.

146 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 202.

147 Kun, Document 28, pp. 620–2.

148 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 233, 234, 233.

now come the call, in Zinoviev's words, to study 'the question of Leninism and Trotskyism' as 'two fundamentally different systems of tactics and politics'.¹⁴⁹

Safarov was disarmingly clear about the intentions of the 'discussion': 'We have set ourselves the task of *making Trotskyism speak for itself in its own language*. We think it will be useful to purge the party consciousness once and for all of the hypnosis of pompous "leftist" rhetoric which is rife with the most shameless opportunism'.¹⁵⁰ The cudgel against Trotskyism was wielded most directly by the party's leading lights. In Kamenev's use, the term 'Trotskyism' was clearly intended to transcend the man Trotsky, and was a warning for the party to be on its guard. Zinoviev picked up on Kamenev's warning, suggesting that the party had to be 'so Leninist and so mature' that it could distinguish Trotskyism from Leninism. He traced a direct lineage for Trotskyism from Trotsky's earliest works in 1903 to the recent 'The Lessons of October'.¹⁵¹ Stalin built his speech in November 1924 around an explicit contrast between 'Trotskyism' and 'Leninism'. Trotskyism, Stalin said, consisted of three elements. First, it relied on the theory of permanent revolution which, Stalin explained, was doomed from the outset because it underestimated the peasantry in any future revolution. Second, it had no faith in the Bolshevik Party principle, namely its 'monolithic character' and its 'hostility towards opportunistic elements'. Third, it sought to 'discredit, to defame' the leaders of Bolshevism.¹⁵² For his part, Molotov singled out 'The Lessons of October' for being 'poisoned with the worst aspects of Trotskyism'. Where some argued for the long-standing and antithetical nature of the systems of Trotskyism and Leninism, Molotov called the 'The Lessons of October' nothing less than a current 'political platform' for an attack on 'Lenin and Leninism'.¹⁵³

Trotsky was moved to respond to the particulars of these attacks, although he was unsure about the wisdom of doing so publicly. In his unpublished piece, he placed the term 'Trotskyism' in quotation marks throughout, denied that such a movement existed, and slyly accused people of mistaking 'inevitable nuances of thinking' in Bolshevism for 'Trotskyism'. There was no reason, he wrote, to raise the 'spectre of "Trotskyism" as a threat to the party'. He understood precisely what the term signified: 'The charge of "Trotskyism" against my "The Lessons of October" thus becomes the central knot which binds the entire

149 Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 363.

150 Safarov, Document 19, p. 485.

151 Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 335.

152 Stalin, Document 9, p. 227.

153 Molotov, Document 13, p. 400.

edifice of the “Trotskyist” threat to the party’.¹⁵⁴ The word, he noted in his later published letter to the CC, ‘emerged quite unexpectedly for me only during the discussion of my book *1917*’.¹⁵⁵ Less guarded in his earlier unpublished piece, Trotsky cheekily drew an analogy between the term ‘Trotskyism’ that was being wielded against him now by the party, and the term ‘Leninism’ that had been used against Lenin by Bolshevism’s pre-revolutionary enemies. ‘Leninism’, he noted wryly, had been introduced into the lexicon of the Bolshevik Party only since Lenin’s illness and especially after his death.¹⁵⁶ Trotsky may well have seen himself as a victim like Lenin, but had this response been published, his detractors would undoubtedly have seen this statement as but one more cynical and self-serving attempt to appropriate Lenin for his own ends.

Paradoxically perhaps, the true intransigence of the ‘literary discussion’ was best illustrated not by the most vehemently critical pieces but by one composed in a shockingly different register, a piece that remained unpublished at the time. Bukharin’s confidential letter in 1924, titled, with unusual candidness, ‘To All the Members of the Central Committee Who Are Enemies of Trotskyism’, contrasted sharply even with Bukharin’s own tone in his other published pieces in the ‘discussion’. In those earlier pieces he had been relentless in his condemnation of Trotsky and Trotskyism, arguing that Trotsky’s analysis of October was not just incorrect but ‘distorts reality’ and ‘history’, was a ‘fantasy’, was marked by the ‘depth of his errors’, and ‘misleads the reader’. Trotsky, he wrote, occupied the ‘tedious realm of grey abstraction’.¹⁵⁷ He had elsewhere devoted special attention to exposing the egregious mistakes Trotsky had made in his theory of ‘permanent revolution’, or as he colourfully put it, the ‘snug coffin of Trotsky’s logical schemes’.¹⁵⁸ In his confidential letter, Bukharin still blamed Trotsky’s ‘completely false and deeply harmful political line’ for threatening to cause a split in the party ‘along the Stalin-Trotsky axis’. He also however blamed the majority of the CC, even going so far as to imply that by ignoring Lenin’s earlier explicit warnings in his ‘Testament’ about a potential split and the need for the party to learn to ‘coexist’ with Trotsky, the CC and all ‘Leninists’ were being ‘absolutely anti-Leninist’ on this issue. Bukharin believed that the ‘literary discussion’ – this ‘forced offensive’ or ‘all-out war to the death’ as he called it – was counter-productive, and that it could cause all kinds of disaffected and suffering people in society to be drawn to Trotsky because ‘these people tend

154 Trotsky, Document 10, p. 291.

155 Trotsky, Document 24, p. 583.

156 Trotsky, Document 10, p. 287.

157 Bukharin, Document 3, p. 153, 158, 156, 158, 161.

158 Bukharin, Document 20 p. 553.

to rally around “persecuted” heroes of the revolution’. If the party abandoned any attempt to coexist with Trotsky, he warned, it would inevitably embark on a destructive, and ultimately self-destructive, path. The schism that would ensue would be ‘under the guise of the expulsion of the opposition’ but a schism nonetheless, and the party’s chosen course (namely the fight against Trotsky) was a ‘nasty and artificial elixir, a narcotic which produces artificial excitement but ultimately weakens the organism of the party’. Bukharin’s description of the ‘terrorist state of mind’ that had developed inside the party under the influence of the ‘literary discussion’ was in some ways as devastating as Trotsky’s critiques in ‘The Lessons of October’: ‘mutual distrust, cynical violation of jointly taken decisions, the selection of people solely to harm Trotsky or to harm each other, the construction of categories, mutual conspiracies, etc.’. He concluded that ‘this completely “novel” form of discussion, where there is neither discussion nor even any sensible explication, is a sign of *decline*’.¹⁵⁹ Bukharin’s ambiguous stance here vis-à-vis Trotsky was perhaps due in part to his own rather modulated attitude to Trotsky especially since 1917, at times supporting, at times criticising, various aspects of his thinking.¹⁶⁰ Whatever the reason for it, Bukharin’s extraordinarily candid tirade against the party must have read like a provocation to his comrades in the Central Committee. Both Trotsky and Bukharin intuitively understood what ‘Trotskyism’ was really about, and both were disturbed by the campaign’s potential implications for the future of Soviet Russia. By early 1925, the term ‘Trotskyism’ had come to denote nothing less than a mortal threat to revolutionary history in Russia, with a reach far beyond Trotsky alone. As Bukharin concluded with a dark and eloquent warning to all who would listen in the Central Committee: ‘The “Trotskyism” of Trotsky is of course not limited to Trotsky’.¹⁶¹

The Content of the Form: The Polemical Turn in Soviet History

As odd as it might seem, the themes addressed in the ‘literary discussion’ were in some ways secondary to its form and conduct, which were arguably far more influential on the future course of Soviet Russia than the ideas that were being condemned so vigorously in these few short weeks. The form, literary scholarship tells us, has content.¹⁶² The ‘literary discussion’ was neither literary nor

¹⁵⁹ Bukharin, Document 21, p. 568, 560–61, 562, 568, 566, 568–69.

¹⁶⁰ Vasetskii 1989, pp. 112–16.

¹⁶¹ Bukharin, Document 21, p. 560.

¹⁶² White 1987.

a discussion.¹⁶³ There was no exchange of views, no back and forth of opinions, no suasion, mild or harsh, and no movement of ideas or philosophies on either side (there were only two sides of course, Trotsky's and his opponents'). This was *tout court* an orchestrated polemic deployed by the Bolshevik Party as a set piece. Writing in December 1924, Boris Souvarine, a French Communist who had been expelled from the party and the Comintern for his defence of Trotsky a few months earlier, noted a 'level of unimaginable frenzy, shamelessness, and hatred' in the polemic.¹⁶⁴ It had deep roots in the often intense and cloistered atmosphere of revolutionary circles [*kruzhkovshchina*] that had marked Russian revolutionary politics since well before 1917. These circles had not fostered conciliatory spirits in their members, but, under the often oppressive and isolated conditions of the post-1907 period (the 'doldrums' as Trotsky's biographer Isaac Deutscher termed this period),¹⁶⁵ they produced rather 'elitism, sectarianism, and intolerance'.¹⁶⁶ This 'circle spirit' carried over into the later Bolshevik Party organisations, and, as evidenced by the 'literary discussion', into the postrevolutionary period.

A polemic is by definition dramatic and performative, designed to demonstrate axiomatically the 'truth' of one set of beliefs by exposing the 'falsity' of another. This 'truth' or 'falsity' is demonstrated less through argumentation than by sheer force of assertion. Whereas a debate or a discussion can countenance the coexistence of two sets of opinions, a polemic cannot. Declaration of victory or admission of defeat are the only two outcomes of a polemic. This is not to imply that the views expressed in this performance were false or cynical ones. It would be a mistake to assume *a priori* that those who were engaged in a fierce struggle for leadership after Lenin's death were motivated solely by a hunger for power, just as it would be hackneyed to ascribe the various Bolsheviks' contributions to the polemic to mere forelock-tugging to Stalin. This was a public polemic in the sense that it had to be performed by the most prominent and self-consciously revolutionary 'actors', in a 'theatre' designated for the purpose, and to a particular 'script'. Historian Jeffrey Brooks has charted the role at this time of newspapers like *Pravda* in setting the agenda for that 'script'.¹⁶⁷ As a polemic deployed in the service of revolution, it fed on a broader performative dimension of revolution as a modern transformative project.¹⁶⁸ Radicals

163 Cf. Swain 2014, p. 100.

164 Quoted in Broué 1988a, p. 454.

165 Deutscher 1954, ch. VII.

166 *The Making of Three Russian Revolutionaries* 1987, p. 4; Walker 2002, pp. 107–23.

167 Brooks 2000, ch. 2.

168 Hunt 1984; Ozouf 1988; Baker 1990; Lüsebrink and Reichardt 1990; Kroen 2000.

like the American journalist Albert Rhys Williams, who went to Russia in 1917 to watch 'revolution' in action, saw 'an insistent fact, assailing us in eye and ear with banners and battle-cries, parades and assemblages'.¹⁶⁹ Observers who were less sympathetic to revolution saw a more sinister performance under-way.¹⁷⁰

In the very first weeks of the new Soviet state, actors of various political stripes had seen a need to declaim publicly and loudly that the events of October 1917 in particular constituted either a genuine revolution or an illegitimate coup d'état.¹⁷¹ Mass spectacles and anniversary celebrations in the streets and squares of the capitals and major cities, as well as revolutionary theatrical, cinematic, and artistic projects in the first decade after October sought to perform and re-perform the immediate revolutionary narrative of the October insurrection in ways intended to produce an inexorably accretive public experience of October.¹⁷² In these early years, mock agitation trials put Lenin and the RKP(b) (and more esoteric foes like illiteracy and sexual depravity) in the dock of 'public opinion', so that their exoneration through staged polemics could offer yet one more performance of a correct Leninist and Bolshevik revolutionary narrative.¹⁷³ The 'literary discussion' was both performative and prosecutorial, each participant playing the role of public prosecutor often on a particular aspect of the charges being levelled against Trotsky by the party. As in a court case, the weight of evidence was intended to be cumulative against the accused, although in this case, like the mock agitation trials, the verdict was a foregone conclusion.

In the 1924 polemic, several of the major 'indictments' were delivered at large party venues, sometimes, as in Kamenev's case, repeatedly over the course of a few days to different groups.¹⁷⁴ These speeches could be read in near-verbatim accounts a few days later in the pages of *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*. But even pieces that were written directly for the press shared certain rhetorical traits with the public speeches. Many addressed the party rank-and-file directly in personal terms. Their tone was chatty and colloquial, full of repetition, bluster, hyperbole, and personal invective. They fought for the readers' attention with visual cues, interspersing italics, bold type, multiple question and

169 Williams 1921, p. 197.

170 For example, Wilton 1919; Wilcox 1919; Warth 1967.

171 Corney 2000, pp. 185–203.

172 Schlögel 1988, Geldern 1993; Clark 1995; Corney 2004; Rolf 2006.

173 Wood 2005; Cassiday 2000.

174 Kamenev, Document 8.

exclamation marks, lending the pieces a rather frenetic and obtrusive feel.¹⁷⁵ The speeches not infrequently warned readers or listeners about Trotsky's storied facility with both written and spoken language. Bubnov cautioned that 'comrade Trotsky, as we know very well, – is a skillful man of letters, and in order to grasp the fundamental elements in his new book, it must be read especially closely'.¹⁷⁶ Kamenev invoked Lenin's condemnation of Trotsky's 'revolutionary phrase-mongering' and his denigration of Trotsky as a 'diplomat of the smallest calibre'. Kamenev's own observation that Trotsky's 'gifted pen has served the party repeatedly' was not intended as praise.¹⁷⁷ The careful listener or reader, it was implied, had to see through Trotsky's artifice. Andreev showered Trotsky's rhetorical gifts with sarcastic praise. Trotsky, he wrote, certainly possessed an 'alacrity of phrase and gracefulness of ideas', but these were nonetheless out of step with the party. He went on to mock 'the forms and schematic edifices of comrade Trotsky's ideas'.¹⁷⁸ Kviring referred to Trotsky's 'ability to create a fog – to speak in insinuations'.¹⁷⁹ Kuusinen commented that Trotsky's 'fine aesthetic sense' had the effect of clouding the 'harmful' contradiction in his views 'between form and content, between representation and reality, between theory and practice'.¹⁸⁰

The language of the polemic was neither anaemic nor sterile, even though the protagonists were united in their near-lockstep public condemnation of Trotsky's analysis of October. Krupskaja seemed to offer at least a measure of respect for the 'polemical passion' of 'The Lessons of October'. While expressing her uncertainty whether 'comrade Trotsky is guilty of all of those mortal sins he has been accused of', she noted that the 'tone of *The Lessons of October* was bound to provoke a similar tone in the ensuing polemic'.¹⁸¹ There was still space at this time in Soviet public discourse for such minor caveats about Trotsky, and for individual flourishes of self-expression. Zinoviev was especially fond of deploying sarcasm to highlight what he regarded as the poor logic or hollowness of Trotsky's reasoning. He snipped that Trotsky had so misunderstood the role of class antagonisms in the course of the war and the rise of the revolution in 1917 that he, Trotsky, believed that the war was merely an 'accidentally accidental accident'. He also implied that Trotskyism was a 'sow's ear'

175 Safarov, Document 19.

176 Bubnov, Document 29, p. 647.

177 Kamenev, Document 8, p. 210, 211, 200.

178 Andreev, Document 23, p. 577.

179 Kviring, Document 27, p. 617.

180 Kuusinen, Document 12, p. 383.

181 Krupskaja, Document 15, p. 428.

which would not be improved with a covering of Leninist 'silk', and accused Trotsky of paying tribute to 'impressionism' with his tendency to see things in 'dark colours'.¹⁸² Kuusinen argued that Trotsky would often make a 'wise revelation' about a particular event only after the fact, adding that such a retrospective insight was 'very cheap and completely useless'.¹⁸³ Safarov similarly 'praised' Trotsky's 'innate gift of historical "foresight"', making sure to supply edifying quotation marks of course.¹⁸⁴ Kuusinen made fun of Trotsky's 'private calendrical theory', namely his belief that a date and time had to be fixed for any insurrection.¹⁸⁵ Often picaresque epithets to describe Trotsky abounded in these pieces. Molotov called him a 'reckless fire-setter of the disagreements in our party'.¹⁸⁶ Safarov was particularly adept at the inventive, and quite playful, slight. His use of the saying 'The one who can accept this should accept it', about Trotsky's need to admit to the real effects of his actions, would have amused the erudite reader who recognised this Biblical quotation about impotent eunuchs accepting their fate.¹⁸⁷ Trotskyism was also inventively dismissed as 'that umbrella for all weather' and 'as elastic as rubber'.¹⁸⁸ Kun's exquisitely tortured definition of 'Trotskyism' is worth quoting in full:

Trotskyism is in no way a complete, self-contained system of principles but precisely the opposite. Trotskyism is in fact an absence of system. But just as in Hamlet, 'Though this be madness, yet there is method in't', so in Trotskyism's absence of system there is a system. In the realm of theory and principle, in the realm of practical politics, this 'system' means eclecticism, Menshevism. There is no exception to this, even if the current pulls the ship of politics with irresistible force in a revolutionary (meaning a Bolshevik) direction, even without the compass of theory.¹⁸⁹

These kinds of analogies and metaphors were revealing, perhaps unwittingly so. These Bolsheviks often used mechanical or physical metaphors, invoking the world of materiality and modernity in order to expose the supposed insubstantiality – and immateriality – of Trotsky's arguments. Transmission belts,

182 Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 342, 344, 357.

183 Kuusinen, Document 12, p. 373.

184 Safarov, Document 19, p. 493.

185 Kuusinen, Document 12, p. 377.

186 Molotov, Document 13, p. 403.

187 Safarov, Document 19, p. 489.

188 Safarov, Document 19, p. 490, 492.

189 Kun, Document 28, p. 623.

gears, and levers often featured in these metaphors, a way of conveying a sense of an internally integrated, and smoothly functioning, socialist society as a sharp contrast to the kind of society that Trotsky's theories would have produced.¹⁹⁰ To convey the irresistibility of Trotsky's long-standing attraction to the wrong political trends, Kuusinen likened it to 'a magnetic anomaly which stubbornly points the arrow of the compass in a "new direction"'.¹⁹¹ By contrast Lenin was apparently living in the modern, material world. 'Lenin's fundamental and special "feature" was that will did not predominate over reason', wrote Molotov, and he went on to praise 'the reason of our leader, unusually gifted and imbued with the essence of the basic gains of contemporary science'.¹⁹² Kun used a different material analogy to criticise Trotsky's 'eclectic method' of trying to reconcile fundamentally irreconcilable elements. Trotsky, he wrote,

proceeded from an abstract, fundamentally false, yet for all that very glossy, formulation, according to which Marxism 'chemically' binds the reformist and the revolutionary trends. The chemist's formula is prepared in the following way: take 'revolutionism' (not the revolutionary method!) from the Bolsheviks and 'worker reformism' from the liquidators, mix them together and you get Marxist tactics on the basis of the semi-feudal, semi-capitalist society of tsarist Russia.¹⁹³

Zinoviev offered the following convoluted physical analogy to convey the need to see through the razzle-dazzle of Trotsky's arguments to the lack of substance it concealed. Trotsky's political position, he said,

shimmers with all the colours of the rainbow ... Take the great arc of the various colours of electric light-bulbs. It is very bright. You are confronted by all of the colours of the rainbow, by many bulbs – red, green, blue, white. And yet the colour of the bulbs is ultimately a matter of secondary concern. Behind it all is one particular medium: electricity. So it is now with comrade Trotsky's current position. On the surface it also shimmers with all of the colours of the rainbow. It is our task to understand what the substance is, what the foundation is. And here we maintain that the foundation consists of some kind of 'negative matter [*minus-materia*]',

190 Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 354; Bukharin, Document 21, p. 561; Kun, Document 28, p. 633.

191 Kuusinen, Document 12, p. 382.

192 Molotov, Document 13, p. 394.

193 Kun, Document 28, p. 625 Cf. Safarov, Document 19, p. 491.

of something which is non-Bolshevism, which for the time being can be described only as non-Leninism.¹⁹⁴

Trotsky can hardly have been overly surprised by the aspects of his writings that his Bolshevik comrades chose to pillory in the polemic. After all, he had been making similar criticisms for some years in his speeches and writings, although, as he pointed out to the CC in his letter in mid-January 1925, 'not once in these years did anyone say to me that these or those ideas or proposals revealed a special tendency, "Trotskyism"'.¹⁹⁵ He appears though to have been taken aback somewhat by the concentrated nature, the vitriol, of the polemic in late 1924, and was reluctant to engage with it publicly. He informed a party cell meeting that he did not want to start a 'new discussion' with a published riposte to the polemic, that it would be 'political suicide' to try to replace Leninism, and that he would never have published his earlier piece had he known it would have caused such a 'campaign' against him. He was, he said, even ready to tear out the offending pages on the permanent revolution.¹⁹⁶ His only direct engagement with the polemic at its height in November 1924 was intended, he wrote, to 'calm' the atmosphere in the party, although he also described the 'literary discussion' as but a 'pretext' for an all-out personal and political attack on him.¹⁹⁷ It remained unpublished. He must have quickly become well aware of the stakes of the polemic, and of the perils of bucking the party leadership in the pages of *Pravda*. His concerns reverberated in the graveside eulogy he delivered in late 1924 for his secretary, Mikhail Glazman, who had committed suicide after the public humiliation of expulsion from the party for the crime of 'speculation'. Trotsky pointedly praised Glazman's skill at distinguishing truth from lies.¹⁹⁸ This man, he implied, had survived both Civil War and tuberculosis, but had met a more formidable foe in the shape of a party intent on cleansing itself of 'impurities'.

The Road to the Polemic

The immediate trigger for the 'literary discussion', for this polemic, was of course Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October'. Tearing out 'offending pages' would

194 Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 358.

195 Trotsky, Document 24, p. 583.

196 N.A. Uglanov – I.V. Stalinu. 18 dekabria 1924 g.' 1991, p. 176.

197 Trotsky, Document 10, p. 285, 283.

198 Pinnow 2010, pp. 91–2.

not have changed the course of the polemic, however, for it was animated by far more than outrage, sincere or otherwise, over the utterances of a perceived upstart. It was a calculated response to protracted crises in the new Soviet state and the deep insecurities they had engendered both within the Bolshevik Party and the international Communist movement. With his recent piece, Trotsky had sinned mightily against the party he had only so recently joined. He had essentially argued that Soviet Russia's greatest triumph – the October Revolution and Civil War – was also the source of centripetal forces that threatened to tear apart the entire Soviet project. The polemic was the party's attempt to stem the entropy.

Although the New Economic Policy (NEP), launched in March 1921, had offered the young Soviet regime something of a respite from the litany of severe internal political and economic threats it was facing at that time, this respite had come at ideological cost. The shift from the maximalist state-driven policies of war communism during the Civil War to a more mixed economic system was accompanied by efforts within the party to bring its disharmonious voices under control, notably with the ban on factions adopted at the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921. The Bolshevik Party, like Russia's radical parties in general, was no stranger to conflict. It had of course been born of schism at the Second Congress of the RSDRP in 1903, and Lenin had brazenly constituted his own small group of schismatic Bolsheviks as the Bolshevik Party (RSDRP(b)) in Prague in 1912. The voting patterns for the Constituent Assembly, which was quickly dissolved by the Bolsheviks on its opening in January 1918, were a case-study in the fluidity of identities among the radical parties, in the often poor sense of identification with them in the broader populace, and in the particularly fractious nature of the Bolshevik Party.¹⁹⁹ Moreover, the upheavals of revolution and civil war had reconfigured the party membership in fundamental ways. The Old Bolsheviks who had been there since 1903 would scarcely have recognised the party that emerged from that cauldron.²⁰⁰ At the head of the party, Bolshevik leaders had to deal with a variety of dissonant, if not quite dissident, voices after October, not least the Left Communists, the Workers' Group of the RKP, the Democratic Centralists, the 'Workers' Truth' Group, and the Workers' Opposition. Even after the ban on factions, the major gatherings of the party continued to air disagreements on a broad range of important issues, including at various times the role and form of central planning, trade unions, and foreign trade in the developing socialist economy of Soviet Russia. In early

199 Radkey 1990.

200 Service 1979.

1922, Trotsky and Zinoviev were on the side of the enforcers of party discipline, stifling criticisms of the party from the coterie of Alexander Shlyapnikov and the Workers' Opposition.²⁰¹ At the same time, the party leadership discussed Soviet nationality policy as it pertained to the fallout from the so-called 'Georgian Affair' of 1922, a dispute over the issue of local autonomy, and Soviet internationalist policy as it pertained to the immanence of – or imminent need for – Communist revolutions in the industrially developed centres of Europe. At party and state meetings, participants decried (and wrote about in *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*) the problems of 'bureaucratisation [*biurokratizatsiia*]' of both the party and state apparatus, whose worst defect Trotsky had caustically defined at the Eleventh Party Congress in March 1922 as the practice of 'addressing a problem without understanding the essence of the problem'.²⁰²

On these issues, alliances and rifts among Lenin, Stalin, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and others were seen in sometimes unexpected permutations, although deeper, more abiding fault lines in their views about Soviet Russia's future were inevitably revealed. In his dictated notes, that came to be known as his 'Testament', Lenin confidentially expressed the fear that these fault lines could eventually rupture into hardening factions in the party (Lenin saw the factions centering on Trotsky and on Stalin).²⁰³ Trotsky believed fervently that central planning, run by experts (including the controversial 'bourgeois specialists' or *spetsy*) rather than by party stalwarts, held the key, first, to solving Soviet Russia's calamitous economic problems (including the 'scissors' crisis in trade, lay-offs, and numerous strikes in industry) in the aftermath of the Civil War, and second, to achieving the larger project of building socialism. Other leaders, among them Lenin, Zinoviev, and Stalin, held to their mistrust of the *spetsy* who dominated bodies like the State Planning Commission (Gosplan), and strongly believed that, at the very least, party supervision was crucial in such bodies (these same concerns extended to the Red Army and the VRK). Part of the concern of the party leaders lay in their misgivings about the changing social composition of the party since October 1917, and especially about the impact of the untrained and uneducated who had flooded into its ranks. The fundamental question for these leaders was whether, as Trotsky put it, the proletariat was developed enough for socialism to be built 'centralistically'.²⁰⁴ Distaste for the growing bureaucratism, most insistently expressed by Trotsky

201 Allen 2015, pp. 231–4, 238–44.

202 'Doklad tov. Trotskogo', *Pravda*, no. 71, 29 March 1922, p. 3; cf. 'Biurokratizm', *Pravda*, no. 65, 22 March 1922, p. 2.

203 Lewin 1968, pp. 77–89.

204 'Rech' t. Trotskogo', *Pravda*, no. 73, 31 March 1922, p. 2.

but shared by many others in the party as well, also hinged on these views of the party. In this context, Lenin reserved a special rebuke for the Worker and Peasant Inspectorate (Rabkrin), a body originally designed to eliminate inefficiency and corruption (and not incidentally Stalin's responsibility until mid-1922), for what Lenin termed its 'pruderie ... [its] ridiculous airs and graces [*zhemanstvo*], or ridiculous self-importance [*vazhnican'e*].'²⁰⁵ Trotsky added that the party's central organs like the Central Committee (CC) and the Central Control Commission (CCC) were also in need of reform.

Underlying these difficulties inside the party was the sense that the party had not yet drawn its own lessons from October, and that part of the Bolshevik Party's internal problems stemmed from a lack of clarity and consensus about its history and especially its role in October. Broad cultural efforts to fashion the events of 25 October as the Great October Socialist Revolution, the transcendent '*événement total*' of the new Soviet state that would eclipse the Great French Revolution, had been underway since October 1917, although these had become truly institutional efforts only from 1920.²⁰⁶ In that year, the party had launched a serious effort to write a seamless narrative of revolutionary development for itself with the establishment of Istpart, and charged it with 'gathering' the scattered pieces of the history of the October Revolution and the Bolshevik Party. This body was quickly brought under the direct jurisdiction of the CC of the party. From the start, Istpart traded on the achievement of clarity of meaning of the October Revolution for the broader populace. It was charged with studying, in the words of its first head Ol'minskii, 'not only the history of the Great Russian Revolution but also the history of the РКР (at least from the moment of the birth of Social Democracy in Russia) – the genesis and growth of that motive force that unflinchingly pushed forward the spontaneous element of the Russian Revolution, beginning on the eve of 1905 to the October Days of 1917'.²⁰⁷ The intent was clear from the outset: the construction of an unbroken teleology of party development, under the perspicacious guidance of Lenin from the split in the RSDRP in 1903, and forged in the revolutionary cauldrons of 1905 and 1917. Istpart sponsored and framed reminiscences by participants (the term was conceived broadly) in an effort to map disparate political experiences from the previous two decades as part of a coherent revolutionary movement. The telos of this movement was of course the October Revolution. An ideological canon, to be created by complementary organisations like the Institute

205 I. Lenin, 'Luchshe men'she, da luch'she', *Pravda*, no. 49, 4 March 1923, p. 2.

206 Lüsebrink and Reichardt 1986; Corney 2004.

207 Ol'minskii 1921, p. 4.

of Lenin and the Marx-Engels Institute became a priority after Lenin's death. Individuals both inside and outside of the party were offered opportunities to refashion their individual biographies as part of this new revolutionary narrative.

All of these sensitive issues were put to a severe test in the latter half of 1923. On the international stage, the RKP(b) and the Comintern were investing significant capital in stoking revolutionary fires in Western Europe, notably in Germany and Italy, and trying to strengthen revolutionary movements all across Central Europe, including Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Austria.²⁰⁸ Given what was going on in Germany in particular at that time, international Communists saw plenty of reason to believe that the 'Europeanisation of the Russian revolution' was on its way.²⁰⁹ Indeed, inside Soviet Russia the party orchestrated a veritable 'German fever' around an impending revolution there, replete with a press campaign throughout the country, a huge amount of published literature, 'corners of the German revolution' in workers' clubs, 'German events', and even commissioned poetry in praise of the coming revolution.²¹⁰ Trotsky, apparently with little disagreement amongst his Bolshevik comrades, had been both actively mustering the forces of the Red Army to intervene in defence of a German revolution, and urging the Comintern to plan for that coming revolution.²¹¹ After all, revolution in Western Europe could mean the end to the ideological and political isolation of revolutionary Russia. This was a significant commitment given that the RKP(b) at this time was still vying for influence in the Comintern with the very powerful and influential Communist parties of Germany (KPD) and Poland (KPP), both of which had long been leary of Bolshevik aspirations to dominance in the organisation, and critical of Bolshevik suppression of voices of internal opposition within the RKP(b) in 1923.²¹²

Friction between the self-professed midwife of modern revolution and its potential progeny derived from disagreements over the timing of the local insurrections, from differing evaluations of the revolutionary forces available to the local Communist parties – in short, from differing estimations of the prospects for revolutionary success. In the Bulgarian case in mid-1923, the General Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Comintern (IKKI) complained that

208 Grishina 1996a, p. 176.

209 Bayerlein 1999, p. 253.

210 Albert 2011, pp. 111–42.

211 Stone 2003, pp. 799–801.

212 Tych 1996, pp. 81–3.

the Comintern knew very little of what was really happening there.²¹³ The BKP was undoubtedly irked that this did not stop the Comintern, and the RKP(b) for that matter, from urging it on towards immediate insurrection. Many Bulgarian Communists believed that a premature seizure of power would be impossible to sustain in the face of what they saw as inevitable intervention by Yugoslavia and Romania.²¹⁴ When it came, the abortive September Anti-Fascist Uprising, organised by Georgi Dimitrov and Kolarov among others, caught a Germany-focussed Moscow unawares, did not enjoy unanimity of support among Bulgarian Communists, and was swiftly and brutally suppressed by the right-wing regime of Aleksandar Tsankov.²¹⁵ In the case of the failed revolution in Germany a month later, scholars have argued that the RKP(b) and the Comintern were hampered by 'excessive optimism and poor information on the true state of German politics', a situation exacerbated by a series of technical errors made by the KPD in its preparations for the 'German October'.²¹⁶ At the time, though, the leadership of the RKP(b) and the Comintern were 'unanimous' in their efforts to assign blame for the failure to German Social Democracy's leftist leaders who had the majority of the working class behind them but refused to join a general strike or the insurrection. In the name of the IKKI, Zinoviev in early November also wrote to the CC of the KPD, accusing its leadership of overestimating the readiness of the party and the masses to seize power.²¹⁷ As late as May 1924, Trotsky, in the introduction to his collected writings on the Comintern, argued that the KPD let the revolutionary opportunities of March 1921 and November 1923 'slip by' because it had failed to recognise a 'mature revolutionary situation'.²¹⁸

Differences of opinion within the RKP(b), the Comintern, the BKP, and the KPD still permitted a measure of real discussion about the crucial issues at stake in the run-up to the Bulgarian and German revolutions. By December 1923 and January 1924 however, these avenues were being closed down by the 'great reckoning'.²¹⁹ For several weeks beginning in early December 1924, the Politburo of the RKP(b) and the IKKI of the Comintern entered a protracted discussion, based on theses drawn up by Zinoviev entitled 'The Lessons of the German Events and the Tactics of the United Front', that was intended to come

213 Grishina 1996a, p. 182.

214 Grishina 1996a, p. 180.

215 Grishina 1996b, p. 142.

216 Stone 2003, p. 806; Babichenko 1994, p. 125.

217 Babichenko 1994, p. 141.

218 Trotsky 1945, p. 8.

219 Bayerlein 1999, p. 255.

to a consensus over the lessons to be drawn from the failed 'German October'. It instead sharpened the divisions in the Bolshevik leadership.²²⁰ For his part, Trotsky saw the failures on the international revolutionary stage as intimately linked with systemic problems that were hamstringing the aspirations of Soviet Russia. The RKP(b) had failed to make the most of 'perhaps the most crucial epoch of history' on 'the eve of revolution in Germany' in part, argued Trotsky in October 1923, because it was wasting its energies on a crusade against enemies in its own ranks.²²¹ The Politburo responded in like vein, attacking Trotsky for sowing discord at a time of foreign danger.²²²

The Discussion of 1923

These exchanges clearly showed a deep concern for the state of international communism, but they should also be read as a reflection of a broad discussion that took place inside the RKP(b) beginning in October 1923. Trotsky must have seemed like a self-appointed Grand Inquisitor with his drumbeat of criticism of the party's international, domestic, and internal problems in his published writings throughout 1922 and 1923. But in October of that year, at the height of the international crisis, a flurry of exchanges between him and the Central Committee argued many seminal economic, political, and ideological issues in painful detail.²²³ The very top of the party, he argued, was in the grip of corrosive, factional interests. Trotsky painted a picture of a party rife with 'illegal oppositional groups', a party whose members were reluctant to report factionalism for fear of recrimination, a party in the grip of an 'absolutely abnormal and unhealthy inner-Party regime'.²²⁴ His charges were all the more serious because of the critical state of the economy in 1923, which in his view represented a grave threat to the socialist project as a whole.

Trotsky further argued that the party had been unable to respond to the economic dissatisfaction of the workers and peasants because its economic policies were shaped rather by propaganda than by reality. Trotsky's criticism of 'today's trade and industrial crisis' and of its effects both on industry and on the Soviet state's fighting capacity was relentless.²²⁵ These exchanges ensured that

220 Babichenko 1994, pp. 147–9.

221 Quoted in Stone 2003, p. 809.

222 Stone 2003, p. 810.

223 Black 2000, pp. 397–416.

224 Vilkova 1996, pp. 46–7.

225 Vilkova 1996, pp. 48–9.

Trotsky quickly became the focus of CC ire, not least because news of them was apparently spreading through the party much more broadly than the Politburo would have liked.²²⁶ This unease was compounded by a petition signed by 46 prominent Bolsheviks on 15 October 1923. It singled out the inner-party struggle at the highest levels of the party as the source of current problems in both political and economic affairs, largely because partisan appointments were putting unqualified people in charge of key economic and state institutions.²²⁷ The party leaders, they implied, were isolated from reality, and the party was ceasing to be a living, breathing, responsive body, because 'Party social opinion had died away'.²²⁸ It was a concerted indictment of the party. The petition's criticism that 'Party independence' had been killed, and that the party had been replaced by a 'selected apparatus of officials', came dangerously close to Trotsky's warning to the party as early as 1904 to avoid 'substitutionism', with 'the Party organisation "substituting" itself for the Party, the Central Committee substituting itself for the Party organisation, and finally the dictator substituting himself for the Central Committee'.²²⁹ None of this would have endeared the petitioners to the Bolshevik leaders.

The party's leading institutions rejected Trotsky's charge of a 'quickly escalating Party crisis' and rebutted one by one Trotsky's many criticisms of the current political, domestic, and foreign policy failures he had laid at the feet of the inexorably bureaucratising party. On the internal party situation, the party leaders folded specific criticisms of Trotsky into condemnation of the broader opinions expressed by what they called 'Comrade Trotsky's Forty-Six Supporters'.²³⁰ Trotsky repeated many of his criticisms in a letter on 23 October and again in a speech at a joint plenary session of the CC and CCC three days later.²³¹ The session adopted a resolution condemning Trotsky for his 'severe political mistake' of fomenting a factional fight and threatening party unity.²³² Trotsky did not soften his criticisms. On 11 December in a letter to *Pravda* entitled 'The New Course', he laid out his discontents in perhaps the most systematic and pointed fashion yet.²³³ Apologising for his absence from the debate on

226 Vilkova 1996, p. 74.

227 Vilkova 1996, doc. 12.

228 Vilkova 1996, p. 84.

229 Trotsky 1980b, p. 77. Trotsky developed this into his later argument of a full-blown 'Stalinist bureaucracy' (Trotsky 1972a).

230 Vilkova 1996, p. 118 and 122.

231 Vilkova 1996, doc. 20 and 21.

232 Vilkova 1996, p. 191.

233 Vilkova 1996, doc. 30.

the state of the party due to a bout of malaria, he decried the influence in the Politburo of comrades who overestimated the role of the party machinery and underestimated the party's critical independent activity [*kriticheskaia samodeiatel'nost'*]. A much-needed 'new course' would steer the party away from the former towards the latter. Trotsky argued against idealised conceptions of democracy and centralism, seeing the future of the party and the country in a balance of the two. Up to now, he added, excessive centralism and bureaucracy had led to the emergence of illegal groupings in the party which were hostile to Communism. But he reserved his most direct criticism for the Old Bolsheviks, that old guard of revolutionaries that had brought revolution but also made mistakes along the way. The party was now in danger of becoming ossified, and could be saved only if the younger generation, 'the most faithful barometer of the party', were permitted to dilute the bureaucracy and the resultant factionalism with an infusion of constructive critical democracy and independent activity.²³⁴ He cautioned the Old Bolsheviks not to meet such constructive criticism with knee-jerk charges of heresy and factionalism. Trotsky also thoughtfully defined the term 'Bolshevik' for the younger generation as the 'man of discipline ... who ... works out his own firm opinion in every case and independently, and with fortitude, defends it not only in battle against enemies but inside his own organization'.²³⁵ He could not resist adding the sarcastic aside that such a Bolshevik would find himself in a minority in his own party.

In a letter to the Politburo on 29 December 1923, Trotsky, Karl Radek, and Georgii Piatakov directly accused *Pravda* of engaging in 'falsification and forgery' of resolutions they were publishing in order to 'deceive the public opinion of the Party relative to what is going on among its members'.²³⁶ Trotsky's own preferred solution was almost quaint, namely to request that the party set up an impartial commission to resolve the issue and punish the guilty. Historians have noted the party's relatively moderate response to Trotsky in this 'discussion'.²³⁷ Carr read the 1923 crisis as a time when 'the opposition could rally round itself a mass of potent, though vaguely formulated, discontent against a fumbling leadership'.²³⁸ Indeed, the main actors were all frequent participants at small and large gatherings of the party, some public and some in camera. Historian Simon Pirani aptly referred to an 'unprecedented babel of discus-

²³⁴ Vilkova 1996, p. 224.

²³⁵ Vilkova 1996, p. 225.

²³⁶ Vilkova 1996, p. 307, 308.

²³⁷ Hincks 1992, p. 139.

²³⁸ Carr 1969, p. 331.

sion' at this time, the last of its kind for decades.²³⁹ In the pages of *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*, activists constantly explained and expounded on the positions they had taken and the disagreements they had had with their comrades. The publishing houses continued to issue all their works in healthy print runs. Notwithstanding the heat and the sharp edges of some of these exchanges, brief reconciliations were attempted and at times brokered among the leading protagonists.

As a result, criticisms at this time often focussed on the party crisis rather than on Trotsky the man. Bukharin told a December 1923 meeting of local committee secretaries that this was indeed 'another deep party crisis', perhaps one of the deepest the party had ever seen.²⁴⁰ Several months later, Kamenev was still quite sanguine in his criticism, arguing at the Thirteenth Party Congress that the 'opposition's mistake' had not been in declaring a 'disease [*bolezn'*]' in the party, but in the methods it put forward to treat that disease.²⁴¹ At a CC plenum in mid-January 1924, with the 'discussion' all but over, a speech by Stalin was most memorable for its conciliatory tone. He described the quite collegial private meetings he and other leaders had had with Trotsky over issues like internal party democracy and factionalism, and gently pointed out a couple of 'corrections' to Trotsky's positions. Stalin conceded that Trotsky enjoyed 'great popularity among oppositional elements', but also argued that Trotsky had been responsible for stirring up the opposition even though there were in fact no 'serious disagreements' between them and the party.²⁴² In similar fashion, an extended published response to Trotsky in 1924 from the editors of *Pravda* offered a pat dismissal of his 'errors' in three major crises in the party since October 1917, namely the Brest peace of 1918, the trade union controversy of 1921, and the 1923 'discussion'. Trotsky's fault was 'a passion for the revolutionary phrase, for the draft idea, for the elegant paper plan'. He was guilty of having a 'fevered factional imagination', although he was apparently not yet guilty of 'Trotskyism', which was not part of this pamphlet's criticisms.²⁴³ Indeed, from 1917 to 1923 there had been no talk of 'Trotskyism' in the party. Most of those who engaged in the 'discussion' of 1923 avoided the term, and the Bolshevik leaders did not invoke it at all in their criticisms of Trotsky at the Thirteenth Party Congress.²⁴⁴ The major contributions of the debate (Trotsky's

239 Pirani 2008, p. 220.

240 *RKP(b)* 2004, p. 322.

241 'Rech' t. Kameneva', *Pravda*, no. 119, 28 May 1924, p. 4.

242 *RKP(b)* 2004, pp. 386–7.

243 *Doloi fraktsionnost'! Otvet tsentral'nogo organa partii tov. Trotskomu* 1924, p. 5, 6.

244 Rogovin 1992, pp. 191–2.

'New Course' letter and the CC response) were published in a special pamphlet in 1924. The introduction quoted Zinoviev to the effect that Trotsky's article 'belongs among those documents which will not quickly be forgotten' in part because the 'theoretical and historical significance of the speeches by comrade Trotsky and the *Pravda* editors was so great'. The pamphlet concluded with a number of conclusions from the 1923 discussion, including the observation that 'freedom of discussion within the party in no way means the freedom to undermine party discipline', but it delivered no explicit condemnation of Trotsky.²⁴⁵ For his part, Trotsky refrained from engaging in an open war of words with his comrades, perhaps sure in the conviction, as historian Gerd Placke put it, that 'sooner or later' the party 'would have to come back to him, the acknowledged or unacknowledged best known and most able party leader next to Lenin, and integrate him into the collective leadership'.²⁴⁶

The discussion of 1923 did not, however, set a tone of tolerance for the future. Much the contrary. Historians have seen in this crisis a change in the tenor of internal party dealings, marked by a visible shift in *Pravda* after January 1924 from a forum in which conflicting groups in the party could still make quite controversial statements to a more official mouthpiece for the upper reaches of the party.²⁴⁷ Whether this shift amounted yet to the onset of a Machiavellian control of the party's mouthpiece by such individuals as Stalin and Zinoviev, as some have argued, is debatable.²⁴⁸ Trotsky was indeed censured at the Thirteenth Party Conference in January 1924, the censure reaffirmed at the Thirteenth Congress a few months later. Still, at that very Congress he was permitted to deliver a forceful speech in his defence. He declared, undoubtedly with some self-satisfaction, that the CC had in fact acknowledged the harmful bureaucratisation of the party apparatus he had so criticised, as well as the gulf it threatened to open up between the party and the masses. He also, however, condemned factionalism in the party, stating that whatever 'just or unjust' decisions the party had taken, 'the party in the final analysis is always right, because the party is the only historical instrument given to the proletariat to resolve its fundamental tasks'.²⁴⁹

The triumvirate of Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Stalin had apparently mooted the possibility of moving more forcefully against the upstart Trotsky as early as

245 'Noyi kurs' – 'Doloi fraktsionnost!' 1924, p. 1, 3, 114.

246 Placke 1994, p. 53, 52.

247 Carr 1969, p. 330.

248 Swain 2006, p. 153.

249 'Rech' tov. Trotskogo', *Pravda*, no. 118, 27 May 1924, p. 5.

mid-1922, but were unable to do so over the objections of an ailing Lenin.²⁵⁰ Notwithstanding later rumours that in 1924–5 Stalin had contemplated having Trotsky killed, he apparently explicitly discounted the use of ‘repressive measures’ at this time.²⁵¹ The crisis of 1923, then, did not trigger a full-scale political assault on Trotsky. The party leaders were perhaps not yet seized by the conviction that the danger of Trotsky exceeded the man. Or the party’s ‘moderation’ – if it only looked like that in contrast to its actions a year later – may have been due in part to Trotsky’s absence from the stage. Trotsky spent the next five months recuperating from illness in the Caucasus, even missing Lenin’s funeral (possibly thanks to Stalin’s machinations). When he returned to Moscow for the congress in May to give his ‘my party, right or wrong’ speech, he also regretted what he strangely called a ‘mistake’, namely falling ill ‘at the critical moment of the party discussion’.²⁵² The party leaders were also unsure at this juncture of the scope and seriousness of discontent in its rank-and-file and the broader population and how that might translate first into open opposition and second into potential support for Trotsky. Historian Aleksandr Reznik has argued that a left opposition certainly took organisational and ideological form by the end of 1923, but that it was an amorphous collection of discontents, irritated by bureaucratisation, intraparty democracy, and party theory, and poorly served by the party’s reduction of them to ‘absurd’ formulations like ‘petty-bourgeois deviation’. For Reznik, a major obstacle to any success of the oppositionists was the lack of consciousness of the party masses and their ignorance of complex party discussions, and that ‘the majority of party members in general did not know about the actual degree of support for the opposition in the winter of 1923–1924’. At this time, moreover, “‘Trotskyist’ self-identification was not widespread among the oppositionists’.²⁵³ Pirani has argued persuasively that the ‘discussion’ in 1923 was a manifestation of the steady Bolshevik rollback since 1917 of revolutionary socialist principle, particularly in terms of the long-cherished and insistent belief in the political potential of the workers. As the revolution receded, it was replaced by more conservative aspects of Bolshevik ideology, such as ‘vanguardism, authoritarianism and statism’. The defeat of the oppositional tendencies, most recently in 1923, was a manifestation of this shift, and evidence of the development of a ‘more efficient mechanism of administration and control’ in which the ‘function of the cells ... was to implement

250 Swain 2006, p. 136.

251 Vasetskii 1989, pp. 94–95; *RKP(b)* 2004, p. 390.

252 ‘Rech’ tov. Trotskogo’, *Pravda*, no. 118, 27 May 1924, p. 5.

253 Reznik 2010, p. 90.

directives from above'.²⁵⁴ The frenzy of commemoration surrounding Lenin's death on 21 January 1924 helped to mask many of these internal problems for a short while.²⁵⁵ But Lenin's death also triggered immense changes inside the party that made their resurgence all but a matter of time.

Unwelcome Intrusions

When his death came, Lenin had been gravely ill and politically sidelined for some time. It still triggered a power struggle at the very top. The party began to purge itself of those who had shown their 'oppositionist' colours, disciplining or censuring them, even stripping some of leadership positions.²⁵⁶ Higher educational institutions in particular were purged from March 1924 onwards.²⁵⁷ The party was purged, in the sense of being radically changed, in a more subtle way as well. The influx in the first half of 1924 of some 200,000 workers into the party in the so-called Lenin Levy has been variously interpreted as an attempt to proletarianise the party, a response to a need for new cadres to fill the burgeoning party and state bureaucracies of the new Soviet polity, and an attempt by the triumvirate of Stalin, Zinoviev, and Kamenev to dilute 'oppositionists' by flooding the party with politically unschooled and docile members.²⁵⁸ On the international stage, the Bolshevik leaders, still smarting from the abject failure in Germany, were busily stamping the authority of the РКР(б) on the Comintern even more forcefully. Historian Hermann Weber has implied that this was the real lesson that the Bolsheviks drew from the 'German October'. The failed revolution inaugurated the primacy of the Comintern over the KPD, and rendered unmistakable the fact that the РКР(б) – and eventually Stalin – now set the policy of the German fraternal party. In this relationship, he argued, only the domestic and foreign policy concerns of Soviet Russia were germane. From now on, KPD members had to pledge allegiance to the revolutionary model of the October Revolution, and Communists had only one fatherland, Soviet Russia, a path of 'Bolshevisation' begun with Ruth Fischer's leadership of the KPD in 1924.²⁵⁹ By autumn 1924, Stalin was busy inaugurating an ideological sea-change with his concept of 'socialism in one country'. This

²⁵⁴ Pirani 2008, pp. 236–7.

²⁵⁵ Albert 2011, p. 131.

²⁵⁶ Reznik 2010, p. 90; Bayerlein 1999, p. 255.

²⁵⁷ Halfin 2011.

²⁵⁸ Hatch 1989, p. 558.

²⁵⁹ *Deutscher Oktober* 2003, p. 32.

signified a shift from the formerly guiding ideological imperative of waiting for Soviet Russia's long-term future to be guaranteed by broad revolution in Europe to a more pragmatic stance of building socialism via 'the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country' first.²⁶⁰

The debacle of the 'German October' would eventually be lost to Soviet historical memory (even Trotsky would omit it from his later memoirs), but not just yet.²⁶¹ With his 'The Lessons of October', Trotsky brought the РКР(б)'s and the Comintern's backing of that lost cause, and many other troublesome issues besides, back into the public spotlight. Sokol'nikov's comment that 'no one has any desire to "repeat those experiences" again' was a colossal understatement.²⁶² The 'literary discussion' of 1924 was launched to ensure that this would not happen. Had Lenin been alive at that time, the polemic would surely have confirmed his worst fears of both an ideological retreat from internationalism and a further hardening of factions inside the party. Trotsky's sin was not heresy (a frequent trope in the historiography of Trotsky's political fate), for party orthodoxy was still in the making. The 1924 polemic was not about extracting an *auto-da-fé* from the sinner but about delivering a sentence. Even if Trotsky's privately expressed regrets about the furore had become a *public mea culpa*, it would have changed nothing. Trotsky's sin was hubris. He had offered the most concrete and uncompromising interpretation to date of the domestic and international significance of October 1917, of the role of the Bolshevik Party in it, and of the respective contributions of his fellow Bolsheviks. And he did it at a time of great ideological and political flux in Soviet Russia. The party was steadily becoming less revolutionary, more hierarchical, and more authoritarian. It still lacked a clear and uncontested narrative of its development, or a widely shared understanding of the significance of the founding event it was still in the process of fashioning, namely the Great October Socialist Revolution. The first fruits of the Istpart project served merely as confirmation of this. Party leaders were confounded by the local published accounts of the October Revolution that had been elicited by the party through the project. In 1923 and 1924, Istpart complained that its local bureaux had not produced enough, and what they had produced was distressingly undocumented and failed to integrate the history of the October Revolution at the local level with that of the Bolshevik Party. Most disturbing to the central authorities was that many local histories failed to mention a Bolshevik Party at all in their region or, worse yet,

260 Stalin 1953a, p. 158.

261 Albert 2011, p. 112; Stone 2003, p. 816.

262 Sokol'nikov, Document 6, pp. 186–7.

stressed good mutual relations between Bolsheviks and Mensheviks at the local level before and after October. In November 1924, the central Istpart conveyed to its local districts a renewed urgency for a cogent history of the RKP and its role in October.²⁶³ Part of this renewed urgency undoubtedly stemmed from the massive influx of new members in the Lenin Levy. Zinoviev had looked for positives in this, noting that the mass recruitment was designed to increase the share of industrial workers in the party in order to make the party 'as homogeneous as possible ... and not to permit inordinate heterogeneity in the social composition of the party'.²⁶⁴ Others were concerned that the new members might lack the political consciousness required for the tasks of the party, implying that they needed careful mentoring by more tested revolutionaries.²⁶⁵ So when Trotsky observed in 'The Lessons of October' that 'we are not clear in our own minds what we accomplished and how we accomplished it', and that 'a gaping hole' existed in the literature on the party's activity in 1917, the salience of his comments would not have been lost on his comrades in the party.²⁶⁶ Many would surely have been concerned how less disciplined and seasoned ears would receive his commentary.

The public nature of Trotsky's commentary was galling to his comrades. The Bolshevik Party had long been accustomed to conducting much of its business in secrecy and was still very sensitive to the ways in which its enemies represented it. The *kruzhkovshchina*, the circling of the wagons when beset by ideological enemies, still left its stamp on the RKP(b). Internal critics, whose words – even through no fault of their own – ended up on the pages of foreign newspapers critical of Soviet Russia, were deemed to be lending comfort to the enemy. Undeniably, vocal Menshevik Internationalists, who had been forced into emigration in Berlin, pored through Soviet newspapers in search of ammunition for their criticisms of the state-of-affairs inside Soviet Russia. Late in 1924, the influential Menshevik Fedor Dan observed in the major Menshevik internationalist newspaper *Sotsialisticheskii vestnik* [*Socialist Courier*], in combative and sarcastic tones that were decidedly unhelpful to Trotsky's cause inside Soviet Russia, that the

campaign against Trotsky launched by the ruling Communist clique is becoming more and more grandiose and cruel. Kilometers of feuilletons, vicious articles, the collective literary output of the Komsomol and even

263 Corney 2004, ch. 4 and 5.

264 Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 353.

265 Halfin 2003, p. 38.

266 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87, 96.

modest bibliographic reviews, have all been put into circulation in order to convict Trotsky of sacrilegious distortion of the gospel of 'Leninism', of relapsing into Menshevik filth and of insufficient respect towards the reason, bravery and other virtues of Grigorii Zinoviev.²⁶⁷

Karl Kautsky, the prominent Social-Democratic theoretician who was infamous inside Soviet Russia for his bitter clashes with Lenin over Marxist dogma, and who had also been highly critical of Trotsky, invoked Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October' in a broad attack on the Soviet system as it stood in late 1924. He referred to 'that terrible apparatus of domination whose machinery crushes anyone who is prepared to defy the ruling elite'. He was also clearly pleased to see Trotsky hoist with his own petard:

the worshipper of power comes into conflict with his colleagues who, after Lenin's withdrawal from the affairs of government, have made themselves at home at the head of the state, and he himself is then seized by this merciless machinery. To such perfect working order has he brought it. What a success! What was for him the means to total power has condemned him to complete powerlessness. His 'arts' have thus brought power to those whom he himself criticises as 'Mensheviks' and 'opportunists'.²⁶⁸

Another perennial gadfly, Paul Levi, the former leader of the KPD who had long since broken with the party, added an introduction critical of the Bolshevik Revolution to his translation of Trotsky's piece. He noted the trend towards the assertion of 'scriptural authority' in the polemic. Slavish quotation from the leader, he implied, marked

the emergence of a Lenin philology, similar to the Goethe philology in Germany or the Pandects literature of the Middle Ages. So in every single situation, volume, chapter, paragraph and clause of a sentence by Lenin will be quoted which will either fit the given situation or not as the case may be. In place of living criticism comes the conception, *autos epha*, the master has spoken. Not only does Trotsky quote Lenin's words in this way, he does it with a certain roguish justification, because he contrasts Lenin's words with the present fleshly leaseholders of Lenin's soul. His adversaries are not idle, for Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin hold up all the works,

267 Fedor Dan, 'Konets Trotskogo', *Sotsialisticheskii vestnik*, no. 22–23, 1924, pp. 8–9.

268 Kautsky, Appendix 2, pp. 701–2.

words and hints of Lenin to refute Trotsky. Commentaries and treatises are delivered and put forth. The *Tausves Jontof* has yet to be written, but we are sure that it will be.

This practice could lead only to a petrification of discourse, and to the ossification of Lenin who was 'both fossilised and sanctified'.²⁶⁹

The polemicists picked up on these kinds of criticisms, Andreev for example eagerly noting that the 'white bourgeoisie abroad' had seized on this new controversy and promoted it in its press as evidence of Soviet Russia's decline. Trotsky, he continued, was furnishing these opportunities, these 'cracks' in the party, and he was becoming a 'magnet for any discontent and petty-bourgeois element'.²⁷⁰ Bukharin too argued that 'the White press abroad' was exploiting the disagreement and 'taking Trotsky under its protection'.²⁷¹ The outrage carried over into 1925, the party sending a confidential memorandum in April to its local organisations denouncing these kinds of articles from the *émigré* press as the result of the 'most monstrous rumours' spread by 'Trotskyists' inside Soviet Russia.²⁷² Kun blustered that Czech Rightist politicians had even called Trotskyism 'an arbitrary construction by Trotsky's enemies, if not a vain fantasy', although his reference to their 'unconscious naiveté' in thinking this left no doubt where he stood.²⁷³

Actually Existing 'Trotskyism'?

A paradox was at play here. Party leaders were unsure of the true level of support for Trotsky in the party (another consequence of their ignorance of the constellation of allegiances in a rapidly changing organisation), and thus sought to manufacture 'Trotskyism' in order to deter actual and potential support for him. At the end of November 1924, Stalin, by then the General Secretary of the CC of the RKP(b), responded to a note from Kviring, Secretary of the CC of the Ukrainian Party [КР(б)У], informing him that several Khar'kov students had invited Radek, Trotsky, and Lunacharsky to lecture on the international and domestic situation and on Leninism. Stalin pointed out that while it would be 'expedient' to have a broad discussion in the press and Marxist circles about

²⁶⁹ Levi, Appendix 1, p. 692.

²⁷⁰ Andreev, Document 23, p. 579.

²⁷¹ Bukharin, Document 21, p. 561.

²⁷² 'Zakrytoe pis'mo' 1991, p. 193.

²⁷³ Kun, Document 28, p. 620, 621.

a range of 'philosophical and political deviations by comrades Lunacharsky, [Evgenii] Preobrazhensky and Radek' [sic], it would be 'inexpedient' to 'develop a mass political campaign around them at the present time'. Instead, wrote Stalin, from now on the focus of the fight should not be 'the individual deviations of individual party members, but Trotskyism'.²⁷⁴ By some accounts, Stalin personally called on party cell meetings to draw up condemnations of Trotsky.²⁷⁵ Clearly, while Bolshevik leaders, and Zinoviev and Kamenev in particular, were worried by the political and ideological implications of Trotsky's analysis of October for them personally, they also seemed concerned about the potential degree of support for him in the broader rank-and-file of the party, even if it was unclear how much of his support derived from his 'oppositionist' positions and how much from the cultish reputation he had acquired as creator and leader of the victorious Red Army in the Civil War. The danger of Trotsky, Bukharin had warned in his confidential note to the CC, derived from 'the tendency for all the malcontents, both inside the party and at its edges, to group around Trotsky ... Already last year the opposition showed itself to be heterogeneous but united around Trotsky on a *negative* platform: everyone against the Central Committee'.²⁷⁶

As late as December 1924 the party was receiving confidential reports of local support for Trotsky – both for his views and for the broader issue of the right of all members to express uncomfortable opinions in the party.²⁷⁷ In a letter to the CC of the party on 15 November, V.A. Elagin, a member of the party since September 1917, saw the "discussion" as a fig leaf on the rift [*treshchina*] in the hitherto unified party body'. The party, he wrote, was 'full of fear, and, I think, you – the leaders of the party – are also as full of fear as we are'. He and others in the party were upset at seeing their revolutionary leaders bickering with each other over which of them was worse, and calling each other 'sons of bitches'. He concluded that 'the party masses cannot imagine the revolution without Zinoviev, Stalin, Kamenev, and not without Trotsky', and importuned the party to 'do something!' He requested that his letter be 'read out in the presence of comrade Trotsky'.²⁷⁸ Some comments by rank-and-file members vis-à-vis the polemic went even further, bordering on open defiance. Two members, on hearing Stalin's speech to the

274 'I.V. Stalin – TsK KР(b) Ukrainy. 29 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, p. 168 (original emphasis).

275 Swain 2006, p. 158.

276 Bukharin, Document 21, pp. 560–61.

277 E.M. Iaroslavskii – I.V. Stalinu. 27 dekabria 1924 g., and E.M. Iaroslavskii – Politbiuro TsK RKP(b). 1924 g.' 1991, p. 177.

278 'V.A. Elagin – TsK RKP(b). 15 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, pp. 164–5.

Council of Trade Unions on 19 November 1924,²⁷⁹ wrote directly to Stalin in December disputing his characterisation of Reed as being 'distant from our party' and of his book about the October Revolution (in which Trotsky had featured so prominently) as being akin to the 'Arabian Nights'. They even invoked Lenin's and Krupskaya's laudatory introductions to Reed's book as evidence that it had real relevance for the Communist youth and that the youth would therefore not understand the 'contradiction' caused by these different characterisations of it.²⁸⁰ Other comrades wrote to *Pravda* asking why Trotsky had not responded to the criticisms of Trotskyism in the 'discussion'.²⁸¹

In late December, the CC of the party was surely unsettled by a recent report on local attitudes. It told of locals asking whether Trotsky really was 'at war with Communists', or if he had 'gone abroad to the Whites', and of others asking exactly what was a 'Leninis [*Leninis*]' or 'Trotskyis [*Trotskyis*]'. Apparently even more disturbing were the conclusions some local party members were drawing from the articles by Kamenev, Zinoviev, Kuusinen, Molotov, et al.: 'Trotsky is an enemy of the Communists and friend of the peasants. Trotsky wants to destroy all state farms [*sovkhosy*]. Trotsky wants to give peasants private ownership of all the land. Trotsky wants to take down the blockade and allow foreigners in, he wants to put all factories, plants, mines and coal-pits into operation so that everyone can have work'. For those peasants who mistrusted October and the state, Trotsky was a Solomon-like figure, the report added, concluding ominously, 'the workers do not believe that Trotsky could come out against Leninism'.²⁸² Some of those who participated in the 'literary discussion' made implicit references to these countervailing opinions among the rank-and-file. While emphasising that Trotsky's authority and support inside the party were being squandered by his 'frequent repetition of mistakes', and that the party this time around was less passionate about the 'discussion', Andreev implied a division of opinion in the party about Trotsky's most recent writing: 'The party cadres ... have decisively condemned comrade Trotsky's efforts, and tomorrow the whole party will understand this and will have to come to the same conclusion'. Andreev mentioned the 'ditherers', 'philistines', and 'people of weak

279 Stalin, Document 9.

280 'Monin i Prikazchikov – I.V. Stalinu. 10 dekabria 1924 g.' 1991, pp. 170–1. Cf. Krupskaya on Reed, see Document 15, p. 430.

281 'Soobshchenie redaktsii gazety *Pravda*. 13 dekabria 1924 g.' 1991, p. 172.

282 'P.A. Zalomov – Obshchestvu byvshikh politkatorzhan i ssyl'nikov. 18 dekabria 1924 g.' 1991, pp. 172–6.

character' in the party who wondered whether the party should be making such a fuss about 'a little article in a thick book'.²⁸³

Recent research has suggested that the party leadership may have been just as concerned about the potential difficulty of animating the rank-and-file *against* critics like Trotsky. Historian V.M. Kruzhinov has argued that in the Urals, for example, the thousands who had joined the party as part of the Lenin Levy were not moved to do so by revolutionary zeal. Instead, the party was inundated with barely literate people, people who had no experience of the Bolshevik underground before the revolution, people 'who had no firm personal opinion on these or those controversial issues'. The party sought to address this problem by 'educating' local party members, particularly throughout 1924, about the 'opposition'. Still, by the time of the 'literary discussion', the Urals Regional Committee [*Uralobkom*] of the party, for fear of 'stimulating intraparty opposition', decided to restrict discussion of the problems raised by Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October' to district and regional meetings, which then dutifully passed their pro forma resolutions of condemnation. In the Urals at least, Kruzhinov concluded, the low level of sympathy for or even outright indifference towards the entire business playing out in the capitals ought not be underestimated.²⁸⁴

The End of the Road

All of these factors had coalesced in the party's decision to launch this campaign against Trotsky in the final weeks of 1924. It had been at least possible for some participants in the polemic (Kuusinen and Bubnov, for example) to note in passing some of Trotsky's 'positive' past deeds and traits as they embarked on their criticisms of him. Early in December 1924, according to Souvarine, Zinoviev spoke openly to the Leningrad Committee of the party about expelling Trotsky, but the committee preferred that such an initiative come 'from below'. The possibility was raised again at a joint meeting of the Politburo and the Presidium of the CCC, but Bukharin spoke against it and Krupskaya even threatened to quit the party if Trotsky were expelled.²⁸⁵ By late December however, the polemicists' tone had become noticeably more condemnatory of Trotsky, and carefully contrite about any perceived generosity towards him on their part.

283 Andreev, Document 23, p. 577.

284 Kruzhinov 2000, pp. 160–7.

285 Broué 1988a, p. 454.

In a letter to *Pravda* on 21 December, a group of Komsomol officials felt it prudent to distance themselves publicly from the support they had expressed for Trotsky a year earlier. They implied that Trotsky's 'personal authority' had blinded them to his stubborn persistence with mistakes he had made in the past, and they found it 'painful' now to have to disagree with him: 'We are for Leninism, against Trotskyism', adding for good measure, 'we are with the entire party'.²⁸⁶ The statement had the air of the confessional about it – a craven plea to the party for absolution for past sins – from a group which clearly recognised something of the devotional in the polemic. The authors blamed Trotsky for leading the Bolshevik youth astray and chided their own inexperience for having allowed it to happen. They added a stock reiteration of support for the party's goals from the Thirteenth Congress: 'the pursuit of the correct Leninist policy in all areas, the future increase in the proletarian component of the party, the unceasing activation of the masses, the tough, clear struggle against all deviations, and, first and foremost, against Trotskyism – in short, the Bolshevisation of our party, and moreover – this is the only guarantee against the danger of degeneration'.²⁸⁷ Other local party organisations were concerned how their criticism of Trotsky might be 'misconstrued' in light of the shifting political fortunes at the top of the party. In February 1925, for example, the Communist Party of the Ukraine saw fit to caution its members that its condemnation of Trotsky should in no way be understood as an endorsement of Zinoviev's and Kamenev's views. Indeed, it considered 'recent steps of comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev to be harmful to the unity of the party', even using the terms 'Stalinists' and 'Zinovievites' as counterpoints.²⁸⁸ Increasingly, rote, bloodless condemnations of Trotsky by local party committees became the order of the day in the pages of *Pravda* and *Izvestiia*.²⁸⁹

In January 1925 Kanatchikov, Ol'minskii's successor at Istpart, countered Trotsky's depiction of party history in 'The Lessons of October' with the most

286 Averbakh et al., Document 18, p. 482, 481.

287 Averbakh et al., Document 18, p. 484.

288 'Chleny TsK i TsKK KP(b) Ukrainy – chlenam TsK RKP(b)' 1991, p. 190, p. 188.

289 Among many examples, see 'Rezoliutsiia Khar'kovskog gubkoma po povodu vystupleniia t. Trotskogo', *Izvestiia*, no. 267, 22 November 1924, p. 3; 'Po povodu vystupleniia tov. Trotskogo', *Pravda*, no. 269, 26 November, p. 7; 'Za Leninizm! Biuro Komiacheek v Koshitse (Chekho-Slovakiia) o vystuplenii tov. Trotskogo', *Izvestiia*, no. 271, 27 November 1924, p. 4; 'Partorganizatsii o Trotskizme', *Izvestiia*, no. 287, 16 December 1924, p. 4; 'Po povodu vystupleniia tov. Trotskogo. Plenum zakavkazskogo kraikoma', *Pravda*, no. 291, 21 December 1924, p. 5; 'Kak otvetila partiia na vystuplenie tov. Trotskogo', *Izvestiia*, no. 15, 18 January 1925, p. 2.

sterile and prescriptive piece of party hagiography yet. The party, he wrote, had been forged over the previous two decades in a relentless battle against the tendencies, factions and deviations in the broader socialist movement and in the RSDRP, a party that had failed to appreciate – or worse still, simply ignored – Lenin's sage foresight. Kanatchikov contrasted Lenin's plan for a 'centralised, disciplined party of the working class' with Trotsky's defence 'of the principle of formless party organisation'. He contrasted the party's long 'struggle for the consistency and purity' of its revolutionary theory – 'never the "dogma" our enemies often accused it of being' – against the poorly defined 'Trotskyism' of the 'so-called Trotskyists', terms which he read back onto the pre-war era.²⁹⁰ How starkly this barren piece contrasted with Bukharin's subtle and measured picture of loyalties in the party in his earlier confidential note to the CC:

We must depict the party as it is, with all its stages and with all its nuances. Here we see the basic structure of the party, ... among these comrades, ... there are a certain number of opponents; only a small number of these are out-and-out Trotskyists; the overwhelming majority are not Trotskyists but form a bloc with Trotsky; some of them are ethical Bolsheviks who are unable to tolerate the 'offenses' against Trotsky, who see his talent but underestimate the harmful effect of this talent; next comes a stratum of conscious party members; a significant majority of these, while being completely behind the Central Committee, at the same time 'respect' Trotsky and appreciate the service he has given; they would applaud him while *voting* against him. Finally comes the great 'grey' mass of the remaining party members, who do not understand much, who do not understand a discussion which, for them, has no justification (an important percentage of the 'Lenin Levy' make up this group). *This* stratum on the whole is in tune with a 'just egalitarianism' or with an 'egalitarian justice'.²⁹¹

Fittingly perhaps, the end of the polemic was marked by the same man who had triggered it with his 'The Lessons of October'. On 15 January 1925, Trotsky wrote a letter to *Pravda* addressed to the upcoming plenum of the CC. He apologised for his absence from the plenum through illness but stressed his belief that he could raise enough 'substantial objections of principle and fact' to refute the

290 Kanatchikov, Document 31, p. 683, 684, 682, 681, 685.

291 Bukharin, Document 21, p. 563.

charges against him of trying to revise Leninism or diminish Lenin's role. He decided against doing this, he wrote, because '*in the context of the present discussion*, any statement I make on this subject, regardless of content, character and tone, will serve only to deepen the polemic further, to transform it from a one-sided into a two-sided polemic, to give it an ever sharper cast'. Instead, he rather lamely justified 'The Lessons of October' as but the refinement of ideas he had already articulated publicly in many speeches and published works, which until now had elicited no substantive objections from the Politburo or its members.²⁹² Trotsky's letter was published in the official press a few days later, along with a plenum resolution condemning him. The two options laid out in the resolution spoke volumes about the hardening discourse: the party could either abandon those Bolshevik principles Trotsky had spent so long attacking or it could 'put an end to such attacks once and for all'.²⁹³ This 'choice' was once again rhetorical. Trotsky was accused of offering a Bolshevism without Leninism, of trying to substitute Leninism with Trotskyism. Listing Trotsky's transgressions against the party since 1920, the resolution noted that the recent 'literary discussion' had made it crystal clear that the party had been dealing with 'two fundamentally opposed systems of politics and tactics' all along. From now on, the 'discussion' was to be replaced with an energetic campaign of party enlightenment to explain the lessons of Trotsky and the dangers of Trotskyism. The resolution charged the Politburo to continue the propaganda work to inform the rank-and-file about the 'anti-Bolshevik nature of Trotskyism from 1903 to "The Lessons of October"'.²⁹⁴ Stalin had heralded as much in his letter a few days earlier to the Kamchatka provincial committee of the party. He did not simply condemn Trotsky out of hand, but took pains to explain to the local committee Trotsky's 'distortions' of the historical record in 'The Lessons of October' ('the April demonstration, the April Party Conference, the June and July Days, events connected with the activities of the Pre-parliament and the course of events in October'). He suggested that the Kamchatka committee read up on the matter using one of the recently published collections of critical essays analysing 'The Lessons of October'.²⁹⁵ The tone of these publications was set by a collection early in 1925 of Lenin's writings pertaining to Trotsky, and intended to demonstrate Lenin's long-standing and consistent criticism of Trotsky's

292 Trotsky, Document 24, p. 582.

293 Plenum resolution, Document 25, p. 586.

294 Plenum resolution, Document 25, p. 594.

295 'I.V. Stalin – Kamchatskomu Gubkomu RKP(b). Ne pozdnee 17 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, pp. 187–8. He suggested in particular *Za Leninizm. Sbornik statei* 1925.

'conciliationist' positions since the Second Congress of the party in 1903 up to the recent 'discussion' over trade unions in Soviet Russia.²⁹⁶

By the start of 1925, the internal, often confidential, discussions of the leadership were turning to commensurate punishment for Trotsky's sins. Not insignificantly perhaps, Trotsky was again largely out of commission from the end of January to mid-April 1925, because he was convalescing in Sukhumi, Georgia from a recurrent illness, and was, by his own admission, only capable of limited 'literary work' with his doctors' permission.²⁹⁷ On 5 January, Stalin and Bukharin proposed to the Politburo that Trotsky be removed only from his post as Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council, but be permitted to remain in the Politburo because it was 'more expedient to have comrade Trotsky inside the Politburo as a seventh member than outside the Politburo'. Both were concerned that excluding him from the Politburo would eventually mean having to expel him from the party, and that 'other members of the opposition who are in the most important posts' might also have to be removed. This would create 'difficulties and complications' for the party.²⁹⁸ The leaders were clearly concerned how Trotsky's relegation would be received in the party at large. Kvirring assured Stalin that the local committees in his Ukrainian organisation were fully behind the removal of Trotsky not only from his military post but also from the Politburo, but nonetheless inquired of Stalin about the prevailing 'moods [*nastroeniia*]' within the leadership.²⁹⁹ Stalin responded that majority and minority views existed, the former (including Stalin) counselling that Trotsky be warned rather than expelled from the Politburo, the latter desiring his immediate removal from the Politburo but permitting him to remain in the CC.³⁰⁰ Interestingly, Tomsky, the only Politburo member who did not contribute to the polemic, believed the measures against Trotsky to be 'premature' because the party's 'consciousness' had not been adequately prepared for it. He could, he said rather oddly, support Trotsky's removal from the Revolutionary Military Council only if Trotsky himself requested it.³⁰¹

296 *Lenin o Trotskom i Trotskizme* 1925. It was reviewed immediately in the press ('Lenin o Trotskom', *Izvestiia*, no. 10, 13 January 1925, p. 7). An introduction written for the volume by Ol'minskii was published early ('Predislovie M. Ol'minskogo k vykhodiashchei na-dniakh knige Lenin o Trotskom i trotskizme', *Pravda*, no. 280, 9 December 1924, p. 2; see The Chkheidze Controversy, Document 14).

297 'L.D. Trotskii – Politbiuro TsK RKP(b). 19 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, p. 186.

298 'I.V. Stalin i N.I. Bukharin – Politbiuro TsK RKP(b). 5 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, p. 179.

299 'E.I. Kvirring – I.V. Stalinu. 5 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, p. 180.

300 'I.V. Stalin – E.I. Kviringu. 11 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, p. 183.

301 'M.P. Tomskii – I.V. Stalinu. 6 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, p. 181.

Such counsels of restraint were rare, and the party replaced Trotsky as People's Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs on 15 January 1925 with another Civil War hero of cult status, Mikhail Frunze. Trotsky was also removed from the chairmanship of the Revolutionary Military Council of the USSR. Notwithstanding the demands of Zinoviev and Kamenev, he was formally permitted to remain in the Politburo, although the party plenum warned him that further breaches of party discipline would bring immediate expulsion from the Politburo and even possible removal from Central Committee work altogether. In May he was appointed to relatively minor positions in charge of the Main (Foreign) Concessions Committee, the Electrotechnical Administration, and the Scientific-Technical Department of the Supreme Council of the National Economy. Trotsky took his new duties seriously, although in January 1926 he complained about being frozen out of the Central Committees of the party and of the Comintern, which, he implied, were acting clandestinely and illegitimately.³⁰²

The Long Reach of 'Trotskyism'

The signalled end to the polemic did not mean an end to oppositional activity around the figure of Trotsky. Indeed, a major function of the polemic had been to create a 'Trotskyite Opposition' for a 'greater' end. Recent studies have argued that in 1923–4 there was in fact no opposition organised by Trotsky (and by implication no organised Trotskyism as such). A 'small factional group' had formed around Trotsky, united in its criticisms of mistakes made by the CC, but not offering 'any programmatic alternative to the policies of the CC'. The very term 'Trotskyism' was 'contrived' [*izobreten*] in the Bureau of the Secretariat of the CC, with Stalin, Bukharin, Kamenev, and Zinoviev all playing a crucial role in the 'creation of the myth of the so-called Trotskyist opposition at this time'.³⁰³ Historian Igal Halfin has recognised the watershed nature of these years and persuasively argued that the events of 1924–5 in particular transformed the 'oppositionism' that had been a constant companion of revolutionary politics into a 'mental predicament diagnosed by the Party's hermeneutics'.³⁰⁴ Carr put it more colourfully: 'a cautious and shamefaced beginning had been made with the work of building up, side by side with the new and sacrosanct canon of "Leninism", a new and satanic credo of "Trotskyism"'.³⁰⁵

302 Schapiro 1970, pp. 302–10.

303 Skorkin 2011, p. 138.

304 Halfin 2007, p. 178.

305 Carr 1969, p. 325.

The reality was that anyone who expressed any disagreement or opposition within the party in the future would run the risk of finding themselves tarred with this sobriquet. During the polemic, Bukharin had confidentially warned the party leadership about indulging its desire to 'pluck from the foot of our party organism the painful thorn' of Trotsky, rather than trying to co-exist with him. The party, he cautioned, would have to

use all means to *provoke* Trotsky, to push him to intervene, to stop at nothing (including snide digs, not electing him to the Presidium, not publishing his articles, removing him from ceremonies, prohibiting him from lecturing on this or that subject, etc); to make use of these interventions in an organised way, namely by passing resolutions in every instance from the highest bodies of the party and by making these resolutions the point of departure for new attacks; to provoke him repeatedly ... to the point that daily life becomes physically unbearable.³⁰⁶

Stalin apparently took this as a challenge rather than a warning, embracing every opportunity to wear Trotsky down with all such attacks. One such opportunity was a short work on the fight for power in the Bolshevik Party which was published in the West in 1925 by American journalist, Max Eastman, who had visited Russia several years earlier and even married a well-connected Russian artist before returning to the West. He praised Trotsky's role in the October Revolution and Civil War, dismissed charges that Trotsky had worked with the Mensheviks before October, and anointed Trotsky as Lenin's rightful heir. It landed Trotsky, rather than Eastman, in hot water. In June, Trotsky was pressured by the party, and by Stalin in particular, to publicly distance himself from Eastman with a strong critique of the work in which he was to deny being the source of the author's inside knowledge, particularly of Lenin's 'Testament'. Although Stalin had demanded that Trotsky use such words as 'slanderer' and 'counter-revolutionary' against Eastman, Trotsky's critique was much milder.³⁰⁷ This kind of provocation must have weighed on a man who, a few months before, was recovering from an attack of a chronic illness.

Even in his depleted state, Trotsky still had one last major political battle to fight in Soviet Russia. After the triumvirate had criticised him in unison in the polemic of 1924, the alliance crumbled, and within a year Stalin had defeated the new so-called 'Zinovievite Opposition'. For much of that year, Trotsky had

306 Bukharin, Document 21, p. 562.

307 Fel'shtinskii and Cherniavskii 2013, pp. 159–66. The book in question was Eastman 1973.

stood on the sidelines, still regarding Zinoviev and Kamenev as his 'most confirmed antagonists'.³⁰⁸ By mid-1926 though, Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev formed a common front, the so-called United Opposition, against the rising dictatorial power of Stalin. In a long speech on the occasion of Felix Dzerzhinsky's funeral on 22 July 1926, Stalin singled out the trio criticised by Lenin in his Testament (although he denied that it was a Testament). Lenin had cautioned against blaming Trotsky personally for his 'non-Bolshevism', Stalin said, but added darkly that 'from this it follows that comrade Trotsky needs to be cured of "non-Bolshevism"'. Lenin, he added, had also pointed out the 'non-accidental' nature of Zinoviev's and Kamenev's earlier 'errors' in 1917, Stalin adding that 'a certain recidivism of these mistakes was demonstrated in front of us at the 14th Party Congress'. By invoking Lenin's last words here, Stalin, as historian Stephen Kotkin has pointed out, did not just 'neutralize their main weapon – the damned Testament – he flagellated them with it'.³⁰⁹ Stalin had set the tone. More a marriage of political inconvenience than convenience, the new front lay in ruins by late 1927, hundreds of erstwhile Trotsky supporters joining the Stalin 'revolution' into the early 1930s.³¹⁰ The last stand in Soviet Russia by Trotsky and his supporters, in alliance with Zinoviev and Kamenev, has provoked some controversy of late over the nature of that stand. For some, the Left Opposition, through its final incarnation as the United Opposition, represented the revolutionary road not taken in Soviet Russia, largely because of Stalin's victory in the personal fight for leadership of the party (in this view, the so-called Right Opposition around Bukharin that resisted Stalin's revolution from above was not a desired alternative).³¹¹ For Trotsky's biographer, Pierre Broué, the 1924 polemic was the moment, increasingly inevitable in his view, when the October Revolution's fate became inextricably bound up with Trotsky's sacrifice at the hands of the Stalinists.³¹² Against this view, others have argued that this was no long-standing defence of workers' interest against Stalinist bureaucratism, and in fact Trotsky and his supporters had consistently failed to support the real worker and peasant opposition to Stalin's destructive policies of rapid, forced industrialisation and collectivisation.³¹³ The fight of the United Opposition against Stalin had never been an equal one, and was marked by an inconsistent and half-hearted mixture of defiant opposition, meek capit-

308 Daniels 1960, p. 273.

309 Kotkin 2014, pp. 606–7.

310 Marot 2006, p. 189.

311 Cliff 1991; Deutscher 1959.

312 Broué 1988a, p. 447.

313 Marot 2006; Daniels 1991; Felshtinsky 1990.

ulation, recanting of former positions, even a repudiation by Trotsky of Lenin's 'Testament', and a promise to renounce his theory of permanent revolution.³¹⁴ Leonard Schapiro offered the dismissive verdict that the opposition was by 1927 already a 'discredited and somewhat ridiculous band of failures'.³¹⁵

However the final stand would be judged by posterity, the lessons from the 1924 polemic reverberated through 1926 and 1927. The earlier polemic had forced Zinoviev and Kamenev, and other leading Bolsheviks, to publicly nail their colours to the mast. For any case Stalin wished to make against them in the future, the polemic had ensured that they could be easily hanged with their own public words. A Kafkaesque example of this was a 1927 work by E. Girchak entitled 'The Betrayal of Leninism'. Directed at the recent alliance of Zinoviev and Kamenev with Trotsky, Girchak indicted the former pair by citing the latter's 'The Lessons of October', 'where all the errors of Kamenev and Zinoviev in 1917 were codified'. The author reprised Trotsky's strategy in that work, in which he had reduced his opponents' revolutionary careers to their errors in 1917 as revelatory of a pattern of behaviour that had preceded 1923–4. Girchak merely extended this approach to their current alliance with Trotsky, which was further evidence of their lack of revolutionary backbone and of their 'baffling stunts'. As for Trotsky, Girchak implied that he had never had any right to hold forth on what constituted a Bolshevik, for 'as a matter of conviction *Trotsky had never been a Bolshevik*'.³¹⁶

The polemic had rendered the term 'Trotskyism' politically lethal. In the course of 1926 and 1927, Stalin pushed more and more expulsions of party members through the CC. Zinoviev was removed from the Politburo in April 1926 and from his leadership of the Comintern in October. Both Trotsky and Kamenev (a candidate member) had been expelled from the Politburo. In October 1927, Stalin forced Zinoviev's and Trotsky's expulsion from the CC, and in November Trotsky was expelled from the party. The delayed Fifteenth Party Congress in December rubber-stamped this, along with the expulsions of 75 other 'oppositionists'. Like the polemic, the Fifteenth Congress was a performance of power rather than a forum of deliberation. Soon after his expulsion from the party, Trotsky was sent into internal exile in Alma-Ata (Almaty) in Turkestan in January 1928. The departure was not without drama, as supporters crowded the train station, clashed with police, while his son Lev Sedov hysterically screamed 'Look, they're taking Trotsky away!'³¹⁷ Trotsky

314 Daniels 1960, pp. 274–5.

315 Schapiro 1970, p. 306.

316 Girchak 1927, p. 47, p. 46, p. 63 [original emphasis].

317 Patenaude 2009, pp. 99–101; Pantsov 1990, p. 83; Marie 2006, pp. 309–10.

expected to return to Moscow, and many party members feared the harm he could do to the USSR even from internal exile.³¹⁸ A year later Trotsky was sent into foreign exile in Turkey where he spent the next four years of his life. France and Norway then offered him a precarious, shadowy refuge until, with the Norwegian socialist government under pressure from the Kremlin to expel him, he was finally granted political asylum in Mexico. For the next three years, he endured financial difficulties, raucous protests by Mexican Stalinists, and a violent assassination attempt, until his murder at the hands of a Stalinist agent in August 1940. The long arm of 'Trotskyism' had stretched far.

The systematic and uncompromising nature of the polemic revealed that the challenges represented by Trotsky's recent writings were regarded as a clear and present danger to the Soviet state and the Communist project, and Stalin and the party had learned their lessons well. As the 1923 crisis of the party had subsided, and the cult of Lenin gathered steam, Zinoviev had written an epitaph in *Pravda*: 'Lenin is dead, Leninism lives'.³¹⁹ A fitting epitaph to the 'literary discussion' of 1924 could have been 'Trotsky is dead, Trotskyism lives'. Trotskyism lived, but it required broader publicity, if not explanation, for it to serve Stalin's purpose. In the first years after the polemic, numerous collections of the seminal articles from the intraparty crisis or commentaries on them appeared, often published by provincial presses.³²⁰ The introductions to these works generally contextualised the crisis by retrospectively folding all prior instances of disagreement in the party into a broader tale of conspiracy engineered largely by one manipulative individual:

In the actions of the opposition of 1923, the reader will find in embryonic, and at times even in developed, form, the basic elements of those formulations which in 1926/27 were woven into a distinct neo-Menshevik pattern. Already in 1923 all anti-Leninist groups in the ranks of the party had merged into a single bloc fighting against the Bolshevik CC; already

³¹⁸ Klushin 1997, pp. 21–2.

³¹⁹ G. Zinov'ev, 'Shest' dnei, kotorykh ne zabudet Rossiia', *Pravda*, no. 23, 30 January 1924, p. 1.

³²⁰ Bukharin 1925; *Trotskii pered sudom Kommunisticheskoi Partii. Otvet Trotskomu* 1925; *Za Leninizm. Sbornik statei* 1925; Zalutskii 1925; *Leninizm ili Trotskizm. Sbornik statei i rechei* 1925; *Literaturnaia polemika po povodu knigi tov. Trotskogo '1917'. Sb. rechei, statei i retsenzii* 1925; *Za Leninizm, protiv Trotskizma (po povodu 'Urokov Okt'. tov. Trotskogo)* 1925; Goloshchekin 1925; Iaroslavskii 1926a; *Bol'shevizm ili Trotskizm. Sb. st.* 1925; Petropavlovskii 1925; Martynov 1925; *Protiv Trotskizma: 36–60 tysiacha* 1925; *Partiia i oppozitsionnyi blok* 1926; Kolokolkin 1927; Roshal' 1928; Boiarskii 1928.

at that time this bloc was led by comrade Trotsky, who preferred, by the way, to remain in the shadows during the decisive battles.³²¹

The increasingly didactic and prescriptive nature of official pronouncements on Trotskyism was illustrated well by a primer on Trotskyism published in 1925. The author began by elaborating on the theoretical disagreements between Leninism and Menshevism (or 'Opportunism' as it was later referred to in the primer, a term that allowed for other 'deviations', such as the SRS, to be folded in as well). The primer depicted Trotskyism as a more pernicious and dangerous form of 'Menshevism' and 'Opportunism', because Trotsky had kept up a 17-year battle against the party until he joined it in 1917. Clearly, this was an attempt to put to rest the minds of the rank-and-file which were potentially confused by the argument that a man of whom Lenin had been very critical early on, who had nonetheless been permitted to join the party, and who had been a hero of the revolution and the civil war, had apparently in fact constituted a long-term threat to the party. The polemic had only just concluded however, and the primer's indictment of Trotsky was still a little conditional:

Why is [Trotskyism] dangerous? If Trotskyism is Menshevism, but dressed up in revolutionary phrases, if Trotskyism is the underestimation of the peasantry in the motive forces of the revolution, if Trotskyism is the reconstruction of the party along Menshevik lines, if Trotskyism is the struggle against the basic Bolshevik cadres, then it is a direct threat to the existence of the party, a threat to the firmness of the Communist line of the Communist Party of the West.³²²

The engine of party history, Istpart, through its journal *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, revisited 'The Lessons of October' and other of Trotsky's works on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution in order to damn once more the Trotskyist revolutionary conception.³²³

More measured contributions became a rarity, like the 1927 entry in an official Soviet encyclopedia which noted attempts at reconciliation between Trotsky and Bolshevism in 1907 and 1909 and acknowledged his leadership role in the October Revolution.³²⁴ Still, even as late as 1928 the campaign against 'Trotskyism' could find itself the object of dark satire. The Soviet writer Mikhail

321 *Diskussiiia 1923 goda. Materialy i dokumenty* 1927, p. iii.

322 Goloshchekin 1925, pp. 3–9, p. 40.

323 Iaroslavskii 1927, pp. 73–90; and Savel'ev 1927, pp. 28–33; Heller 1982, pp. 700–9.

324 Thatcher 2003, p. 8.

Zoshchenko penned an 'Unpleasant Story' just after Trotsky's expulsion from the party. In this tale, the chatter at a dinner party in 1924 turned to 'Comrade Trotsky's book' which was quickly denounced by a guest as 'sheer trotskyism'. Another guest demurred, however, pointing out that 'we don't yet know what Trotsky understands by the word trotskyism'. When a guest tried to telephone Trotsky to ask him, he was instead greeted by stern questioning from the authorities about his reasons for calling, making the assembled guests nervous. It ultimately transpired that the entire thing had been a prearranged hoax by one of the guests.³²⁵ At this time, the cues for conduct both inside and outside of the party were still a little vague. While the Politburo was in fact undertaking stricter measures to ensure the confidentiality of its discussions, it was not yet ready to launch a full 'bureaucratic clampdown' within the party. Instead, those condemned as part of the United Opposition were still able to defend themselves at the highest levels of the party, in the process rejecting the charges against them and putting forward their own positions.³²⁶ Still, these campaigns against the 'Opposition' had an undeniable chastening effect on political discourse. 'It has become impossible in our circles', Souvarine wrote to Trotsky from Paris in 1929,

to begin a speech without backing it up with a heap of explanations, corrections and restrictions. There is no longer a common language among communists. This is a very striking sign of trouble and decline ... We constantly feel that we have said too much, or not enough, whatever precautions we take. Every term seems to require explaining.³²⁷

As late as 1932, Iaroslavskii, who had been very active in the various history-writing enterprises, was similarly discomfited. He privately warned Stalin of the hazards of 'unjust criticism' and, he implied, of the devaluation of political language for the party at large:

You have launched a great many barbed arrows at our enemies and at philistinism. Such arrows include pithy terms like '*alliluishchik*' [glorifier of the status quo], 'rotten liberalism', and 'Trotskyite contrabandists'. But we have many people who are imbued with out-and-out servility, who immediately pick up on every new word and use it without discrimination.³²⁸

325 Zoshchenko 2000, pp. 151–3.

326 Service 2008, p. 124.

327 Souvarine 2013, p. 10.

328 Cited in Maslov 1989–90, p. 45.

For his part, Trotsky mused on the legacy of the polemic for years to come. He apparently asked Zinoviev in 1926 whether it would even have taken place if he had not published 'The Lessons of October'. Zinoviev responded that 'certainly it would have happened, because the plan to start the discussion had already been adopted beforehand, and they were waiting for nothing more than a pretext'.³²⁹ In November 1927 he wrote to several comrades complaining that Zinoviev and Kamenev were once again 'bringing up the legend of "Trotskyism"', even quoting Zinoviev's observation that in order 'to string together old disagreements with new issues ... "Trotskyism" was invented'. Trotsky defended himself against accusations that his 'The Lessons of October' had been a tactical blunder which allowed his opponents in the party Politburo an opening for a full-scale, manufactured assault on him:

The gist of the 'literary discussion' consisted in piling up as many facts and quotations as possible against me, culling them from the entire past history of the party, and presenting them – in a distorted perspective and in actual violation of historical truth – to the uninformed party masses. In point of fact, the 'literary discussion' had no bearing whatever upon my book, *The Lessons of October*. Any one of my books or speeches might have served as a formal pretext for burying the party underneath an avalanche – a drive against 'Trotskyism'.³³⁰

He carried the sense of deep injustice with him into exile. In his memoir, written on Prinkipo in the Sea of Marmara in 1929, Trotsky came close to hyperbole in his condemnation of the polemic:

In Leningrad, in Moscow, and in the provinces, hundreds and thousands of preliminary secret conferences had been held to prepare the so-called 'discussion', to prepare, that is, a systematic and well-organized baiting, now directed not at the opposition but at me personally. When the secret preparations were over, at a signal from the *Pravda* a campaign against Trotskyism burst forth simultaneously on all platforms, in all pages and columns, in every crack and corner. It was a majestic spectacle of its kind. The slander was like a volcanic eruption. It was a great shock to the large mass of the party. I lay in bed with a temperature, and remained silent.³³¹

329 Quoted in Broué 1988a, p. 447.

330 Trotsky 1937, p. 89, p. 92, p. 90.

331 Trotsky 1970a, pp. 513–14; cf. similar sentiments by him in 1937, see Trotsky 1994, p. 139.

The Party Writes a History

Ironically, the party leadership eventually heeded Trotsky's original call in 'The Lessons of October' for a coherent party history, although not in the way Trotsky would have hoped. Indeed, the shrinking realm of the possible in Soviet discourse, across the divide of the 1924/5 polemic, can be charted in stark fashion through the successive attempts by prominent party members in the 1920s at a coherent history of the party and revolution as intertwined entities. The Istpart project had been a catalyst for these efforts. Bubnov was especially assiduous in this regard, producing multiple efforts between 1920 and 1931. In a series of articles in *Pravda* in 1920, he identified three 'moments' in the development of the party up to 1917, namely the creation of the Social Democratic Party dedicated to the overthrow of tsarism (from the 1870s to 1903), the emergence and development of Bolshevism and the struggle it sparked between the 'revolutionary proletarian and the opportunistic petty-bourgeois trends' in the party and the workers' movement (1903–17), and the formation of the Communist Party to fight for power and build the proletarian state (1917–19).³³² In his discussion of the third 'moment', which he added when the articles were republished as a pamphlet a year later, Bubnov treated the dissonances within the party at that time largely as teething troubles: 'while the vast majority of Bolshevik organisations immediately took a firm revolutionary proletarian position, at the same time significant vacillations could be observed in the ranks of the party during the first weeks (the month of March) as well as a lack of clarity on the basic line on the question of war, the Provisional Government, the Soviets, attitudes to the Mensheviks, and so on'. Bubnov noted the 'colossal role' played by Lenin's 'Theses' in remedying these problems. Trotsky was mentioned only in terms of his major appointments, such as the chairmanship of the Petrograd Soviet. Stalin was not mentioned at all. Bubnov discussed briefly the 'vacillations' in October at the very top of the party over the timing or feasibility of a seizure of power. He named no names, and stressed that these vacillations bypassed the broad circles of the party.³³³

The 25th anniversary of the RSDRP in 1923 triggered a series of articles in *Pravda* designed to lay out a more concrete history for the party and blurred the lines between the RSDRP and the Bolshevik Party per se in the process. They depicted a party forged in constant battle against the 'autocratic feudal state',

332 A. Bubnov, 'Osnovnye momenty v razvitii kommunisticheskoi partii v Rossii', *Pravda*, no. 256, 14 November 1920, p. 2; see the continuation in *Pravda*, no. 262, 21 November 1920, p. 3 and no. 265, 25 November 1920, p. 2.

333 Bubnov 1921, p. 28, p. 29, pp. 34–5.

against 'bourgeois liberalism', and against the SRs and the Mensheviks. But they also documented 'counter-revolutionary vacillations' inside the 'revolutionary proletarian party' itself, which at times even allowed these 'internal enemies' to remove the Bolsheviks from commanding positions in the workers' movement.³³⁴ The final instalment of the series dealt with the most recent period of party development up to 1923. It told the tale of a party in the midst of change as it prevailed in the Civil War and embarked on the New Economic Policy. It identified oppositionist strands inside the party, including Left Communism, Democratic Centralism, and the Workers' Opposition, and key stress points in the party's development such as the trade union question. The piece acknowledged the 'sharpness' of the 'discussion' in the party at this time, but only in order to emphasise the transcendent unity of the party.³³⁵ The 25th anniversary of the party was also marked by a published illustrated history. Its many articles by prominent party leaders traced the party's history from the First Congress of the RSDRP in 1898 to the Eleventh Congress of the RKP(b) in 1922. To the uninformed (or perhaps informed) reader, Trotsky's six articles ranging from 1905 to 1920 (bested only by Lenin in quantity) formed something of a leitmotif throughout the party's development.³³⁶

A year later, Zinoviev collected six lectures on the party's history into book form, even though they were only 'first drafts' because the 'literature on the history of the RKP is still very meager'. The lion's share of his book focussed on the pre-1914 period, although he added an introductory chapter on the Lenin Levy as a 'new chapter' in the party's life represented by the huge influx of workers from the shop bench into the party, a revolutionary process that was transforming the 'potential energy [of the party] ... into kinetic energy'. Zinoviev took a measured approach to the question of 'workers' democracy within the party', even quoting Trotsky from the 1923 discussion, and seeing in the influx of new members fertile ground for the practice of this 'democracy'.³³⁷ In this short volume he also asked 'what is the party?', the kind of rhetorical question he and other Bolsheviks had been posing perennially since 1917.³³⁸ Zinoviev discussed the linguistic and political origins of the term 'party', and the variety of bourgeois, Miliukovian, and SR efforts to shape it in their own image.

334 '25 let R.K.P. (Tezisy)', *Pravda*, no. 43, 25 February 1923, p. 4, p. 5; also no. 44, 27 February 1923, p. 2 and no. 45, 28 February, p. 2.

335 '25 let R.K.P. (Tezisy)', *Pravda*, no. 46, 1 March 1923, p. 2.

336 *25 let R.K.P. (bol'shevikov) 1898–1923. Illiustrirovannyi iubileinyi sbornik 1923.*

337 Zinov'ev 1924b, pp. 1–2, pp. iii–vi, p. xxvi.

338 Zinov'ev 1924b, pp. 3–40; Nevskii 1917; Zinov'ev 1918a; Shumiatskii 1919; Nevskii 1921.

Zinoviev's goal was to provide the needed 'clarity and precision' to the term.³³⁹ This was essentially a reiteration of Lenin's earlier definition of the 'party of a new type', and a charting of its path to 'consciousness', although Zinoviev also felt a need to define a range of basic terms for his readers, including 'class' [*klass*], 'working class' [*rabochii klass*], 'the people' [*narod*], and 'populism' [*narodnichestvo*]. Bubnov also updated his earlier history in 1924. While he certainly introduced more individual actors into the latter sections of this work, his discussion of the successes of the Civil War focussed on the party rather than on Trotsky. He also took issue with both the commemorative pieces in *Pravda* and Vladimir Nevskii's recent history of the party, criticising the latter's use of 'vague terminology' such as 'left wing' to describe the party. Bubnov made no mention of the recent extended identity crisis within the party in 1923.³⁴⁰

After the polemic and the new leadership struggle in 1926, the cues for the perennial party histories changed radically. Between 1926 and 1930, Iaroslavskii published a four-volume history of the party. It located the 'sources of Trotskyism' squarely in a broader discussion of the Bolshevik fight against 'Menshevik opportunism' which had begun in 1903, and identified Trotsky as the 'ideological inspiration of Menshevism'.³⁴¹ It was still permissible at this time to furnish this critique of Trotskyism with copious quotations from Trotsky's early works, and even to acknowledge that Lenin had seen real value in this young revolutionary at the outset. The author pointed out that even at this early stage, however, Trotsky profoundly misunderstood Lenin's conception of a disciplined party and especially of the role of the proletariat in building it. The confederation of 'Trotskyism' that emerged from the 'literary discussion' was now being furnished with a genealogy, or, as Iaroslavskii artfully put it, Trotsky's 'defence of clearly unrevolutionary positions could not fail to find reflection in the future fate of Trotskyism'.³⁴² The fourth volume, published in 1929, offered an explicit condemnation of Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October', as well as a detailed discussion of the position taken by Zinoviev and Kamenev vis-à-vis insurrection in October 1917. Iaroslavskii reiterated all the major criticisms of Trotsky's piece, adding sarcastically that 'apparently the October Revolution was accomplished by Trotsky, the leader of the Petrograd Soviet, and by the Petrograd Soviet and the masses'.³⁴³ Bubnov's new history of the party in 1931 dealt extensively with Trotskyism, and focussed on the 'party discussion' of 1923–4. Gone were the

339 Zinov'ev 1924b, p. 11.

340 Bubnov 1924, p. 73.

341 Iaroslavskii 1926b, p. 349.

342 Iaroslavskii 1926b, p. 369.

343 Iaroslavskii 1929, pp. 199–205, pp. 241–9, p. 244.

copious quotations from Trotsky used by Iaroslavskii to hang him with his own words. Bubnov now read a long-coherent 'Trotskyism' back onto the earlier period: 'In the discussion of 1923 Trotskyism emerged as the "hegemon" of anti-Leninist trends'. Indeed, Bubnov declared explicitly that all of the features of Trotskyism in the later 'Trotskyist oppositional bloc' were already present in 1923.³⁴⁴ Bubnov now ignored the 1924 polemic in favour of an indictment of the United Opposition of 1926–7, so as perhaps not to remind the assiduous reader of Zinoviev's and Kamenev's earlier opposition to Trotsky in 1924.

A year before Bubnov's history appeared, Stalin wrote a letter to the editors of the journal *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia* offering a broad-brushed condemnation of articles and books he regarded as pseudo-histories that falsified Russia's revolutionary past. Stalin's piece was an unmistakable call for orthodoxy in the realm of history-writing, trading nuance of argument for brutal caricature, and historical inquiry for political prescription. Many of the authors of party histories in the 1920s would not find their way back into print after 1931.³⁴⁵ Stalin's letter inaugurated firings, expulsions, even internal exile of historians of Marxism, and this was but a prologue to the renewed censorship of published materials and the repression of thousands of 'oppositionists' a few years later.³⁴⁶ Stalin singled out Iaroslavskii's history in particular as wanting, and even the revised version in 1933 failed to please him.³⁴⁷ The task of those charged with treating the history of Bolshevism, Stalin wrote, was 'to put the study of the history of our Party on scientific, Bolshevik lines, and to concentrate attention against the Trotskyist and all other falsifiers of the history of our Party, systematically tearing off their masks'.³⁴⁸

This was unmistakable 1930s Stalin, but it had its roots in the 1924 polemic. In 1932, Stalin pledged privately to 'put an end to the arbitrariness and muddle in the portrayal of party history, the plethora of different points of view and arbitrary interpretations of the most important problems of party theory and party history which were to be found in a number of published textbooks on party history'.³⁴⁹ As historian David Brandenberger has argued, the demand was complicated by the fact that 'the doctrinal interpretation of party history was not completely worked out in the early 1930s'.³⁵⁰ Still, in the course of

344 Bubnov 1931, pp. 719 and 720.

345 Brandenberger 2011, p. 34.

346 Medvedev 2005, pp. 72, 74.

347 Avrich 1960, p. 540.

348 Stalin 1955, p. 104.

349 Cited in Maslov 1989–90, pp. 44–5.

350 Brandenberger 2011, p. 35.

that decade the gold standard for orthodox party history would nonetheless be reached in the form of the *The History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks); Short Course*. It embodied the most brutalised and reductive form of the party's narrative, and its launch was accompanied by scholarly panegyrics to Stalin as a new revolutionary 'philosopher-king'.³⁵¹ Even the confidential correspondence at the time among the party's leaders about the *Short Course* revealed, like the earlier polemic, no collaborative give-and-take about the party's history, but merely Stalin's dictates in its drafting and editing, and, it should be said, the servile flattery of his efforts by his Politburo comrades.³⁵² First published in 1938, the *Short Course* became Soviet Russia's revolutionary catechism for the next two decades. Former dissident historian, Roy Medvedev, even attributed its direct question-and-answer catechistic style to Stalin's early years in the seminary.³⁵³ With its 42 million copies between 1938 and 1953, in 301 printings and 67 languages, and a rare formal meeting of the Politburo dedicated to its discussion in the presence of middle-level party officials, all possible effort was made to practice the art of catechesis in the Communist world using the *Short Course*.³⁵⁴ To torture the religious metaphor just a little more, the *Short Course* was eventually de-sacralised by Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev's destalinisation campaign launched at the Twentieth Party Congress in 1956. It quickly fell from grace, finding itself dismissed at the time by one doughty Soviet historian *of the period* as 'lifeless dogma' that had robbed Soviet scholarship of any vitality.³⁵⁵

The *Short Course* was a screed, even more intemperate and reductive than the polemic of 1924, although intimately connected with it. In a letter in *Pravda* in 1937 Stalin singled out one of its major functions. It was to show that the 'struggle of the Bolsheviks against anti-Bolshevik trends and factions was a principled struggle for Leninism' and that, but for this revelation, 'the struggle among the factions and trends in the history of the VKP(b) would have looked like an incomprehensible squabble, and the Bolsheviks as incorrigible and obdurate trouble-makers and brawlers'.³⁵⁶ Brandenberger has argued that, notwithstanding 'official calls' in early 1935 to make the earlier struggles over party

351 Avrich 1960, p. 541.

352 'I.V. Stalin v rabote nad 'Kratkim kursom istorii VKP(b)' 2002, pp. 3–26; 'I.V. Stalin v rabote nad 'Kratkim kursom istorii VKP(b)' 2003a, pp. 3–23; 'I.V. Stalin v rabote nad 'Kratkim kursom istorii VKP(b)' 2003b, pp. 3–25; also Zelenov 2004, pp. 3–31.

353 Medvedev 2005, p. 81.

354 Nureev 2008, pp. 165, 167.

355 Burdzhakov 1956, p. 5.

356 'K izucheniui istorii VKP(b)', *Pravda*, no. 123, 6 May 1937, p. 4.

opposition the focus of 'indoctrinational efforts', by mid-1938 Stalin had edited the text to downplay the role of the opposition in the narrative.³⁵⁷ Nonetheless, 'Trotskyites' and 'Trotskyism' still ran through the *Short Course* of Russian revolutionary history as persistent malintents. Trotsky popped up periodically like Mikhail Bulgakov's Woland, creating mayhem wherever he went. In 1903 he pulled the strings in a secret 'anti-Party factional organization' together with Martov and Pavel Axelrod. In 1912 'Judas Trotsky', the *Short Course* quoted Lenin's term here, organised a 'bloc of all the anti-Bolshevik groups and trends directed against Lenin and the Bolshevik Party' under cover of the lie that he was 'above factions'. In 1917 he sneaked his 'close friends' (the *mezhraiontsy*) into the party in order to 'disrupt and destroy it from within'. A year later, he was part of a 'general counter-revolutionary conspiracy of the Bukharinites, Trotskyites, and "Left" Socialist Revolutionaries against the Soviet power'. In 1923 he and his followers exploited the ailing Lenin's absence to launch their attempt to 'smash the Party and overthrow its leadership'. This, so went the *Short Course*, was a systematic and methodical attack on the party, first against the party apparatus, turning the younger against the older members, and then forcing the party to engage in a general discussion of the viability of the party at a time when it was confronted by far more urgent problems of the country's economic life. The 1924 polemic around 'The Lessons of October' had been the final straw, an 'unscrupulous distortion of the heroic history of Bolshevism'. With Stalin's careful guidance, especially his theoretical work *Foundations of Leninism* in 1924, and his call for Trotskyism to be 'ideologically demolished', the advance of socialism was assured. In 1926 when the 'Trotskyites and Zinovievites united to form an anti-Party bloc, ... a rallying point for the remnants of all the defeated opposition groups', Stalin's prescience ensured that this would be but the final paroxysms of 'the Opposition'. In the 1930s, the 'Trotskyite double-dealers' were unmasked as a 'whiteguard gang of assassins and spies', as 'lickspittles', 'dregs of humanity', 'Whiteguard pygmies', 'insects'.³⁵⁸ Fittingly perhaps, Andrei Vyshinsky, the prosecutor at a show trial in 1937, managed to devalue the linguistic currency even further in this grotesquerie. 'Trotskyism', he said, had spent 'more than thirty years of its existence in preparing for its final conversion into a storm detachment of fascism, into one of the departments of the fascist police'.³⁵⁹

357 Brandenberger 2013, pp. 145, 154–7.

358 *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). Short Course* 1939, pp. 44, 136, 199, 223, 265, 266, 267, 283, 324, 346, 347.

359 *Not Guilty. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Charges Made Against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow Trials* 1938, p. 320.

Rustem Nureev has rightly asserted that the *Short Course* aimed at the 'depersonalization' of party history, that it was 'an instrument of social engineering', and that it shifted 'the accent from historical protagonists to abstractions'.³⁶⁰ Similarly, in Leona Toker's estimation, the 'language microhistory of the meetings that took place in October 1926 [addressing "party discipline"] is dominated by struggles for the semantic value of words'.³⁶¹ Literary scholar Michael Gorham has argued that the value was changing at this time 'from persuasion in the immediate postrevolutionary years to compulsion by the late 1920s', and from a 'revolutionary' to a 'national' and ultimately 'party-state' model of language.³⁶² These processes of abstraction and these semantic shifts had begun in earnest with the 1924 polemic.

Post-Mortem

The elimination of Trotsky was certainly abstract, even metaphysical, in design, the replacement of the man by an '-ism'. After he had been removed from his posts, Trotsky's face and name were excised not only from photographs but also from books, films, libraries, and museums. This was not however primarily an attempt to remove him from History writ large. It was an effort to remove him from a specific revolutionary drama, and especially from any of the scenes he had shared with Lenin in that drama. In Reed's version of the revolutionary drama, Trotsky's frequent presence alongside Lenin (not to mention the near absence of Stalin) ensured that *Ten Days That Shook the World* would soon be banned in Soviet Russia. Shot footage of Trotsky in Eisenstein's *October* [*Oktiabr'*] in 1927, based in part on Reed's book, was cut on Stalin's orders.³⁶³ At the same time, of course, the polemic's zealous affirmation of Lenin's infallibility was another sign of the age of abstraction that had so reduced Trotsky, although this time it was elevating Lenin, and later Stalin, to cult status.³⁶⁴ Ten years later, from his Coyoacan exile in Mexico, Trotsky, the formerly heavily mythologised leader of the Civil War, saw no irony in condemning the Soviet practice of manufacturing "myths" to order:

360 Nureev 2008, p. 168.

361 Toker 2008, p. 135.

362 Gorham 2003, p. 5, p. 19.

363 Leyda 1983, pp. 238–9.

364 Tumarkin 1983; Ennker 1997; *Epic Revisionism* 2006; Plamper 2012.

It is impossible ... without physical disgust, mixed with horror ... to look at reproductions of paintings and sculpture in which functionaries armed with pens, brushes, and scissors, under the supervision of functionaries armed with Mausers, glorify the 'great' and 'brilliant' leaders, actually devoid of the least spark of genius or greatness. The art of the Stalinist period will remain as the frankest expression of the profound decline of the proletarian revolution.³⁶⁵

Of course, ultimately the threats did not remain metaphysical and abstract, and Stalin made sure that Trotsky did not suffer alone. The rising 'abuse' and 'radically harsher language' deployed in the course of the 1920s and into the 1930s, Toker observes, saw verbal violence eventually give way to extraordinary physical violence.³⁶⁶ The 'Russian metaphysical police', as Nabokov's Pnin wryly put it, 'can break physical bones also very well'.³⁶⁷ By focussing his attacks on Zinoviev and Kamenev, Trotsky had forced these men to revisit and justify publicly their past political actions and to acknowledge their past 'errors'. This allowed Stalin initially to play the role of arbiter and remain largely above the fray. 'Unwittingly', wrote Deutscher, 'Trotsky helped to defeat his future allies and to promote his chief and most dangerous adversary' to 'senior triumvir'.³⁶⁸ It would be cruel to seek irony in the ultimate fates of the vast majority of those who helped define 'Trotskyism' as an empty signifier in the context of the 'literary discussion'. Most became victims of that very signifier, that bottomless vessel into which any and all 'opposition' to the Soviet order could be poured. Of the powerful *semerka* of 1924, Zinoviev and Kamenev were among those tried as part of the 'Anti-Soviet Unified Trotskyite-Zinovievite Center' in 1936, while Bukharin and Rykov made their confessions at the trial of the 'Bloc of Rightists and Trotskyites' two years later. All four were executed. Tomsy, who had been reluctant to expel Trotsky in 1924, committed suicide, reportedly on reading in *Pravda* that he had been implicated in the 1936 trial. The sixth member of the *semerka* (Stalin made seven), Valerian Kuibyshev, had not taken a direct part in the polemic, although he did find himself the object of accusations of Trotskyism in the 1930s, later withdrawn. He died of heart failure in January 1935, although several of his relatives were executed during the purges two years later. Of the remaining primary participants in the polemic, Radek and Sokol'nikov were executed after being found guilty at the show trial of the

365 Trotsky 1938, p. 5, p. 7.

366 Toker 2008, p. 135 and p. 137.

367 Nabokov 1960, p. 35.

368 Deutscher 1959, p. 160.

'Anti-Soviet Trotskyist Center' in 1937. Safarov was arrested in the Kirov purges of 1934, and sent to the gulag where he was executed in 1942. Piontkovskii was arrested in 1936, Bubnov, Averbakh, Lebed', Chaplin, Kviring, and Kun in 1937. Some of them were shot immediately, some languished in prison until execution. Kanatchikov was arrested and shot in 1940. Of the polemicists who did not meet this grisly fate, it helped to die before the purges (Ol'minskii and Stepanov), to be a very prominent comrade of Lenin (Krupskaia), or perhaps to be a foreign Communist or prominent in the Comintern (Kuusinen, Kolarov), although this was no guarantee of survival. Nor did groups which had come out in vocal support of Trotsky in 1923 and 1924 escape retribution. In October 1923, the members of the Central Committee of the Polish Communist Party had publicly defended Trotsky, whose name 'is for our party, for the whole International, for the entirety of the world revolutionary proletariat, indissolubly bound to the victorious October Revolution, the Red Army, Communism, and world revolution'.³⁶⁹ They were shot in 1938. One polemicist who avoided this fate, Andreev, survived the purges by championing them, perhaps because he understood well the true function of the term 'Trotskyism'. He escaped execution, but not ignominy. In his memoirs, published in the West after his fall from grace, Khrushchev condemned this erstwhile Trotsky supporter-turned-polemicist for having done 'very many bad things during the repressions of 1937. It is possible that because of his past he was afraid of being suspected of having been too lenient to the former Trotskyists. Wherever he went, many people perished'.³⁷⁰

The After-Life of Leon Trotsky

In a sense, Trotsky was both victim and survivor of the polemic. His reduction to an '-ism' and a term of political damnation for some inside Soviet Russia helped elevate him to an '-ism' and a term of near-beatification for others outside. As Trotsky was exiting one political theatre, he was soon treading the boards of a new stage in emigration. In his unpublished letter in 1924, Bukharin had foreseen as much, criticising the polemic for raising Trotsky's status, especially amongst *émigrés*. It was the start of a 'great masquerade', Bukharin told the CC, in which 'if Lenin was the embodiment of wisdom in the official court of the party, then Trotsky, who had been regarded in the past as one of Satan's

369 Marie 2006, p. 308; Tych 1996, pp. 87–8.

370 'Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva' 1990, p. 78.

henchmen and as the leader of the terrorist wing of our party, acquires the face of a great reformer and a protector of the victims of a party deprived of its leader'.³⁷¹ Indubitably, 'Trotskyism' acquired a quite different valence outside of Soviet Russia. For many committed Communists of the period who embraced the moniker of 'Trotskyist', the Bolsheviks' refusal to take up the blueprint laid out in Trotsky's 'The New Course' was the 'turning-point at which modern [Soviet] history failed to turn' (to adapt the decidedly Whiggish historian George Macauley Trevelyan's judgement on 1848).³⁷² More recently, the American Marxist and Communist, Max Shachtman, called it the 'dividing line' in recent Russian history, separating the 'epochal conquests of 1917' from the 'agony' of its decline.³⁷³ In the West, Trotsky became the object of wish-fulfilment for many individuals. For his biographer Deutscher, he was both revolutionary prophet and lonely outcast, and for lapsed Trotskyist Christopher Hitchens, he was a 'prophetic moralist', 'part kitsch and part caricature'.³⁷⁴ In the early 1930s, Winston Churchill typically spared no hyperbole in his demonisation of Trotsky as possessing 'the organizing command of a Carnot, the cold detached intelligence of a Machiavelli, the mob oratory of a Cleon, the ferocity of Jack the Ripper, the toughness of Titus Oates'. This was praise of sorts from the man who had eschewed any comparison of the 'dull, squalid figures of the Russian Bolsheviks' with the great French revolutionaries.³⁷⁵ Trotsky was Cassandra. He was the 'Old Man'. He was George Orwell's Snowball and Emanuel Goldstein.³⁷⁶ Essayist George Steiner thought of Eteocles 'going clear-sighted to the death gate' when he thought of Trotsky.³⁷⁷ Perhaps he was Eteocles to Stalin's Polynices. Perhaps his forced exile made him Polynices to Stalin's Eteocles. Either way, in the minds of erudite observers, these sons of Marx, like the sons of Oedipus, were locked in mutual antipathy, intent on destroying each other.

Almost a century later, the leader he was during the revolution, the leader he might have been in post-Lenin Soviet Russia, and the leader he eventually became in emigration, still elicit passionate prosecutors and defenders. *Glasnost* in Russia in the latter half of the 1980s helped spark a renaissance of Western interest in Trotsky, and Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October' was reprin-

371 Bukharin, Document 21, p. 561.

372 Trevelyan 1923, p. 292.

373 See his introduction in Trotsky 1965a, p. 121.

374 Deutscher 1954; Deutscher 1959; Deutscher 1963; Hitchens 2004, p. 152.

375 Churchill 1937, p. 170, p. 173.

376 From *Animal Farm* and 1984 respectively (on this, see Newsinger 1999, pp. 110–35).

377 Steiner 1967, p. 366.

ted almost immediately.³⁷⁸ The most recent scholarship in the West on Trotsky has been criticised for essentially continuing the process of his reduction to a political abstraction in the service of a broader polemic about the Soviet system in general. This scholarship, according to its critics, caricatured him as merely a milder form of Stalin ('Stalin light'), it equated Leninism, Trotskyism, and Stalinism in terms of their essential oppressiveness, or it engaged in the old 'vilification and falsification' of Trotsky's political career by exposing 'myths' about Trotsky's role in the 1905 revolution and the Civil War and criticising the sincerity of his internationalism.³⁷⁹

Inside Soviet Russia, Trotsky experienced a quite different 'after-life'. Various denounced throughout his career as a Menshevik, a Leninist heretic, a Communist cosmopolite, he was ultimately tarred by the Stalinist regime with the brush of his own 'calumny' – as a Trotskyist. Tirades against Trotskyism became *de rigueur* in the later Soviet era, although different aspects of 'Trotskyism' were pilloried at different times.³⁸⁰ In the wake of destalinisation, Trotsky's image in the official Soviet media was shifted subtly from 'traitorous plotter' to the milder 'political foe', a shift essentially from 'nonperson' to the more inherently dynamic 'partial person or semiperson', a 'state of suspension', which, Nancy Whittier Heer argued perceptively in 1971, would be difficult to maintain in the long run.³⁸¹ Indeed, Trotsky's appearance as a protagonist in Mikhail Shatrov's 1962 play, *The Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk*, was iconoclastic because he, and a pre-cult incarnation of Lenin in 1918, delivered their original words on-stage in discussions and arguments about the fate of the Russian Revolution.³⁸² They figured as 'living' individuals rather than as caricatured stand-ins for a particular political trend, tendency, faction, or -ism in a broader revolutionary teleology. A range of potential outcomes was still possible in 1918, Shatrov seemed to be telling his audience, but not for long. Of course, Shatrov was not idealising this early period of relatively free discussion as much as highlighting the sterility and orthodoxy of the discourse that had come to stamp much of the Soviet era. He later pointed out that Lenin's original words in one of his plays had so horrified the Soviet censors that they had tried to have them excised from the play.³⁸³

378 Trotsky 1987. See Gödeke 1991; Cox 1992; *The Trotsky Reappraisal* 1992; Zwengel and Wehner 1993, pp. 83–94.

379 Respectively, Tosstorff 2010, pp. 35–42; Thatcher 1994, p. 1421; North 2010, pp. x, v, 53–4, 60.

380 Desolre 1980, pp. 53–67.

381 Heer 1971, pp. 21, 217.

382 Shatrov 1990.

383 Shatrov et al. 2007.

Even though this play premiered in December 1987 at the Vakhtangov Theatre in Moscow, old habits died hard. Even under *glasnost* Trotsky became a whipping-post for all the perceived ills of late Soviet society.³⁸⁴ Indeed, Mikhail Gorbachev chose to launch *perestroika* and *glasnost* as a revival of the October Revolution, a re-embrace of Lenin, and a renewed rejection of Trotsky.³⁸⁵ In this cautionary tale about the limits of unbelief in the Soviet project at this time of crisis in the late 1980s, Gorbachev chose to endorse that earlier moment in Soviet history when those very limits of unbelief were being delineated. As Gorbachev told a joint meeting of the leading party and state leadership in 1987, Trotsky

after Lenin's death, displayed unreasonable pretensions to leadership in the party, having completely confirmed Lenin's estimation of him as an extremely self-assured, always prevaricating and finagling politician. Trotsky and the Trotskyists rejected the possibility of building socialism in conditions of capitalist encirclement ... Trotskyism was a political tendency, whose ideology, by cloaking itself in leftist and pseudo-revolutionary phrases, essentially adopted a capitulationist position. In its essence, this was an attack on Leninism on all fronts. In practice, it was about the fate of socialism in our country, the fate of the revolution.³⁸⁶

While he did not explicitly invoke the 'literary discussion' in his speech, Gorbachev was offering a reprise of the attacks levelled against Trotsky's writings during that polemic in 1924. In a ghostly echo of past erasures and present limits, and notwithstanding general efforts under *glasnost* to expose these falsifications, an old photograph of Lenin, reprinted in 1987, perhaps inadvertently featured Trotsky's disembodied, floating elbow.³⁸⁷ Whatever his intention with his speech, Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost* sparked enormous scholarly interest inside Soviet Russia in Trotsky's life and his early writings, and 'The Lessons of October' was finally republished at the very death of the USSR.³⁸⁸ Leon Trotsky was never officially rehabilitated by the Soviet regime. Not until 21 May 1992 did the Procurator of the Russian Federation expunge the sentence of internal exile handed down on 31 December 1927, and only on 16 June 2001 was this extended

384 Danilov and Porter 1990, pp. 136–46.

385 Broué 1988b, pp. 33–4.

386 Gorbachev 1987, p. 11.

387 'Kto riadom s V.I. Leninym?' 1989, pp. 101–4; Ryan 1988, pp. 22–7.

388 Trotskii 1991.

to his subsequent exile from the USSR, to his deprivation of citizenship, and to the ban on his return to the USSR.³⁸⁹

To be sure, the polemic was but a brief moment in Soviet Russia's early history, a controlled burst of condemnation and recrimination from leading Bolsheviks and international Communists directed against one man but with a broader target in its sights. In this sense it represented a fight for the Bolshevik Revolution as critical as at any time in the previous two decades. Before 1917, the fight for revolution had been between revolutionaries and the tsarist police over its very possibility, in 1917, between moderate and maximalist radicals over its immediate form, and, during the Civil War, between the Reds and the Whites over its survival. In 1924, the fight was among the revolutionaries over the meaning of their revolution in Soviet Russia. The polemic spanned barely three months, yet it established a rubicon for any future treatment of the revolutionary past. It mapped new political and ideological boundaries for permissible political behaviour in Soviet Russia. The polemicists at many levels of the party were clearly aware at the time that boundaries were being demarcated by the polemic, although many would undoubtedly have been shocked to find themselves ultimately on the wrong side of those boundaries with such fateful consequences. If the story of the Bolshevik Revolution in the early years after 1917 had been self-consciously aspirational and explicitly revolutionary, it emerged from the 1924 polemic remade. The polemic was an unmistakable message that the representation of the Bolshevik Revolution had limits, even as the contours of that revolution were still being defined. It was also a warning that transgressing those limits had consequences, even if the precise nature of those consequences was still unclear. That was certainly not the desired intent of Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October'. It was however the intent of the polemic launched in response to it, and it was a lesson bitterly learned by Trotsky.

389 Spravka o reabilitatsii no. 13/2182–90, no. 13/2200–99, Arkhiv NITS 'Memorial' [St. Petersburg]; Service 2009, pp. 366–7.

‘The Lessons of October’¹

L. Trotsky

The Need to Study October

Although the October Revolution [*Oktiabr'skaia revoliutsiia*] was successful for us, it has not found success in print. To date, we do not have a single work, which provides a general picture of the October overthrow [*perevorot*], and emphasises its most important political and organisational moments. Moreover, even the raw materials – and thus the most important documents – that directly describe the individual aspects of the preparation of the overthrow, even the overthrow itself, have yet to be published. We are publishing a great many historical revolutionary and historical party documents and materials relating to the pre-October period, and a good deal of materials on the post-October era. October [*Oktiabr*] itself though is getting far less attention. Having carried out the overthrow, we somehow decided that we did not have to go through it again. It is as if we did not expect the inevitable tasks of future construction to derive any direct and immediate benefit from the study of October, the conditions of its immediate preparation, its execution, or the first weeks of its consolidation.

This assumption however, even though poorly articulated, is deeply erroneous, even in a limited national sense. Although we will not have to repeat the experience of the October Revolution, it does not follow at all that we have nothing to learn from that experience. We are a part of the International [*Internatsional*], and the proletariat of all other countries has yet to solve its own ‘October’ problem. And we had ample evidence last year that the most mature Communist parties of the West had not only not absorbed our October experience, they were quite unaware of the actual facts of the October Revolution.

It might be argued that October should not be studied and that even materials relating to October should not be published, for fear of stirring up old differences [*raznoglasiiia*]. Such a viewpoint is not worth considering. Of course, the disagreements of 1917 were very profound and not at all accidental. But it

1 Trotsky 1924d, pp. ix–lxvii. This was volume III of series I (‘Istoricheskoe podgotovlenie Oktiabria’) of Trotsky’s collected works.

would be pathetic to turn them now, several years later, into weapons to attack those who at that time had gone astray. It would be even more impermissible, though, to keep silent, for trifling personal reasons, about the most important, internationally significant problems of the October overthrow.

Last year we suffered two bitter defeats in Bulgaria. Firstly, the party, for fatalistic and doctrinaire reasons, let slip a highly propitious moment for revolutionary action (the peasant insurrection [*vosstanie*] after the June overthrow of Tsankov). Secondly, the party tried to correct its mistake by throwing itself into the September uprising without having first taken the necessary political or organisational steps. The Bulgarian revolution should have been the prelude to a German revolution. Unfortunately, the nasty Bulgarian action reflected even worse developments in Germany itself. There, in the latter half of last year, we saw here a classic demonstration of how to let slip a perfectly exceptional revolutionary situation of world-historical significance. Once again, neither the Bulgarian, nor even the German experience, of last year has yet received a complete and concrete enough evaluation. The author of these lines traced out a broad outline of the development of the German events of last year (see *Vostok i zapad*, chapters 'Na povorote', and 'Cherez kakoi etap my prokhodim').² Everything that has happened since then has completely borne out that outline. Nobody else has even attempted any other explanation. But outlines are not enough. We need a concrete picture of last year's events in Germany that is packed full of factual material and will reveal the actual causes of that cruellest of historical defeats.

It is hard to talk about analysing the events in Bulgaria and Germany, though, when we have yet to offer a politically and tactically sophisticated picture of the October overthrow. We are not clear in our own minds what we accomplished and how we accomplished it. In the flush of victory after October, it seemed as if the events in Europe would develop on their own and so quickly as to leave no time for any theoretical assimilation of the lessons of October. But it turns out that the absence of a party capable of guiding a proletarian overthrow renders such an overthrow impossible. The proletariat cannot seize power [*vziat' vlast'*] by means of a spontaneous insurrection [*stikhiinym vosstaniem*]: even in highly industrialised and highly cultured Germany, the spontaneous insurrection of the toilers [*trudiashchikhsia*] (in November 1918) only managed to transfer power into the hands of the bourgeoisie. One propertied class is able to take the power that has been snatched from the hands of another propertied class because it can draw upon its own wealth, its own level of culture [*kul'turnost'*],

2 Trotsky 1924f, ch. 4 and 7.

its many links with the old machinery of state. But the proletariat has nothing to use other than its party. Only in mid-1921 did the concrete work of building the Communist parties really begin ('the struggle for the masses', 'the United Front', etc). The tasks of 'October' receded into the background, and with them the study of October. Last year, we were once again brought face to face with the tasks of the proletarian overthrow. It is high time that we gather all the documents, publish all the materials and begin studying them!

We are, of course, well aware that every people [*narod*], every class and even every party learns primarily from its own bitter experience. This does not mean at all, however, that the experience of other countries, classes and parties is of little importance. Had we not studied the Great French Revolution, the revolution of '48, and the Paris Commune, we would never have achieved the October overthrow, even given our experience of 1905. Indeed, even for our own 'national' experience, we drew conclusions from earlier revolutions and followed their historical course. Later, the entire period of the counter-revolution was consumed by the study of the lessons to be learned and the conclusions to be drawn from 1905. And yet, as far as the victorious revolution of 1917 is concerned, we have undertaken no such work, not even a fraction of it. Of course, we are not living through the years of the reaction or the emigration, and yet there is no comparison at all in terms of the power and resources at our disposal today and those available during those difficult years. The task of studying the October Revolution has to be formulated clearly and accurately both at the level of the party and of the entire International. The whole party, and especially its younger generations, must work step by step through the experience of October, which provided the greatest irrefutable and irrevocable test of the past and flung open the gates to the future. Last year's German lesson is not just a serious reminder, it is also a grave warning.

The argument can be made, of course, that even the most thorough knowledge of the course of the October overthrow would still not have guaranteed success for our German party. But that kind of trite and philistine reasoning will get us nowhere. To be sure, the study of the October Revolution alone will not in itself bring victory in other countries; but a situation may arise where all the conditions for a revolution are in place, with the exception of a far-sighted and resolute party leadership that understands the laws and methods of revolution. That was the situation last year in Germany. That can be repeated in other countries too. For the study of the very laws and methods of proletarian revolution, there is, up to the present, no more important and profound source than our October experience. Leaders of European Communist parties who have not studied the history of the October overthrow in all its depth and detail would be like the military commander who, preparing today for new wars, would ignore

the strategic, tactical and technical experience of the previous imperialist war. Such a commander would inevitably condemn his army to defeat in the future.

The chief instrument of the proletarian overthrow is the party. Judging from our experience, accrued admittedly only in the course of one year (from February 1917 to February 1918), and judging from the additional experience in Finland, Hungary, Italy, Bulgaria, and Germany, it seems to be almost an immutable law that a party crisis is inevitable when passing from preparatory revolutionary activity to the immediate struggle for power. Crises within the party generally arise at every serious turn in the course of the party, either as a prelude to the turn or as a consequence of it. This is because every period in the party's development has its own special features and demands specific skills and modes of action. A change in tactics signifies a major or minor break with these skills and modes: this is the direct and most immediate root of frictions and crises inside the party. 'Too often has it happened', Lenin wrote in July 1917, 'that when history has taken a sharp turn, even progressive parties have for some time been unable to adapt themselves to the new situation and have repeated slogans which had formerly been correct but had now lost all meaning – lost it as "suddenly" as the sharp turn in history was "sudden"' (v. XIV, part 2, p. 12).³ This is where the danger comes from: if the turn is too sharp or too sudden, and if the preceding period has seen the leading bodies of the party filled with too many elements of inertia and conservatism, the party will turn out to be incapable of fulfilling its leadership role at that most critical moment for which it has been preparing itself for years, even decades. The party is consumed by the crisis, and the movement passes it by – on the way to defeat.

A revolutionary party is under pressure from other political forces. At each stage of its development, it works out ways of counteracting and resisting them. When a change of tactics occurs and brings internal regroupings and frictions in its wake, the party's power of resistance weakens. It is, then, always possible that internal groupings in the party, which have resulted from the need for a change in tactics, may develop far beyond their origins and serve as a support for various class tendencies. To put it more simply: the party that is out of step with the historical tasks of its own class will become, or risks becoming, an indirect tool of other classes.

If this is true of every serious tactical change, then it is even more true of every major strategic turn. By political tactics, we mean the art of conducting specific operations, to use a military analogy. By strategy, we mean the art of

3 Lenin 1964a, p. 183.

conquest [*iskusstvo pobezhdat'*], i.e. taking power [*ovladet' vlast'iu*]. Before the war, in the era of the Second International, we generally did not draw this distinction, but confined ourselves solely to the formulation of Social-Democratic tactics. And this was by no means an accident. Social Democracy pursued parliamentary, trade union, municipal, and co-operative tactics, among others. The question of consolidating all forces and resources – all kinds of weapons – to secure victory over the enemy was really never raised in the age of the Second International, because the practical aspects of the struggle for power had not been raised. It was only the revolution of 1905 that first raised, after a long interval, the fundamental or strategic questions of the proletarian struggle. In doing so, it secured huge advantages for the Russian revolutionary Social Democrats, i.e. the Bolsheviks. The great age of revolutionary strategy begins in 1917, first in Russia and then throughout Europe. Strategy, though, does not eliminate tactics: questions of trade union development, of parliamentary activity, etc. do not disappear; they now acquire new significance as methods subordinated to a combined struggle for power. Tactics are subordinated to strategy.

If changes in tactics usually lead to frictions within the party, how much more severe and profound must be the frictions caused by changes in strategy! And the most acute change occurs when the party of the proletariat moves from preparation, propaganda, organisation and agitation to a direct struggle for power, to armed insurrection against the bourgeoisie. Everything in the party that remains indecisive, sceptical, conciliatory, capitulatory – Menshevik – opposes the insurrection, looks for theories to justify its opposition, and finds them ready-made in yesterday's opportunistic opponents. We shall see this phenomenon again.

Before the decisive battle, in the period from February to October the party reviewed and selected its weapons on the basis of the broadest agitational and organisational activity among the masses. During and after October those weapons were put to the test in an enormous historical act. To engage now, several years after October, in an evaluation of various viewpoints about revolution in general and the Russian revolution in particular, and to bypass the experience of 1917 while doing it, would be a fruitless, academic [*skhολasticheski*] exercise, and would not be a Marxist political analysis at all. This would be like discussing the advantages of different swimming styles, while stubbornly refusing to look at the river in which the swimmers will be practising these styles. There is no better test of views on revolution than their application at the time of revolution itself, just as a style of swimming is best tested when the swimmer jumps into the water.

'The Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and Peasantry'

February and October

The course and outcome of the October Revolution [*Oktiabr'skaia Revoliutsiia*] struck a merciless blow at the academic parody of Marxism that was very widespread in Russian Social-Democratic circles, beginning in part with the 'Emancipation of Labour' group [*Gruppa 'Osvobozhdenie Truda'*], and finding its most complete expression among the Mensheviks. The essence of this pseudo-Marxism [*lzhe-marksizm*] lay in its transformation of Marx's contingent and limited idea – 'the advanced [*peredovye*] countries show to backward [*otstalye*] countries the form of their future development' – into an absolute, supra-historical law, as Marx would say, and sought to establish the tactics of the party of the working class on the basis of that law. With such a formulation, there could of course be no question of the Russian proletariat fighting for power until the economically more developed countries had set the necessary 'precedent' [*pretsedent*]. It is of course indisputable that every backward country will find *certain* aspects of its future in the history of the advanced countries, but there can be no question of repeating the development in its entirety. On the contrary, the more the capitalist economy acquired a global character, the more distinctive became the fate of the backward countries, which combined elements of their own backwardness with the latest achievements of capitalist development. In the preface to his *The Peasant War in Germany*, Engels wrote: 'At a certain point, *which must not necessarily appear simultaneously and on the same stage of development everywhere*, the bourgeoisie begins to note that its proletarian fellow-traveller has outgrown it'.⁴ The course of historical development forced the Russian bourgeoisie to make this observation earlier and more completely than any other bourgeoisie. Even before 1905, Lenin captured the uniqueness of the Russian revolution in the formula of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. This formulation, as later events showed, can only be taken to mean a stage on the path to the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat that is supported by the peasantry. Lenin's articulation of the problem, revolutionary and dynamic through and through, was diametrically opposed to the Menshevik scheme, according to which Russia could only aspire to repeat the history of the advanced nations [*peredovye narody*], with the bourgeoisie in power and Social Democracy in opposition. Some well-known circles

4 Trotsky has adapted the original quotation: 'At a certain point, which must not necessarily appear simultaneously and on the same stage of development everywhere, it begins to note that this, its second self, has outgrown it' (Engels 1967, p. 7, [Trotsky's emphasis in his text]).

of our party, however, placed the stress in Lenin's formulation not on the *dictatorship* of the proletariat and peasantry, but on its *democratic* aspect, which contradicted its socialist character. Once again this could only mean that in Russia, as a backward country, only a democratic revolution was conceivable. The socialist overthrow was supposed to begin in the West. We could tread the path of socialism only after England, France and Germany. But such an assumption would lead inevitably to Menshevism, as became perfectly clear in 1917 when the tasks of the revolution were a matter not of future concern, but of decisive action.

To take the position, in the actual conditions of revolution, of supporting democracy *in opposition to* socialism as 'premature', if we push it to its logical conclusion, would have meant a political move away from a proletarian position to a petty-bourgeois position, a move to the left wing of a national revolution.

The February Revolution, if we look at it as a separate revolution, was a bourgeois revolution. But as a bourgeois revolution, it came too late and lacked any kind of permanence. Shot through with contradictions, which immediately found their expression in dual power [*dvoevlastie*], it had either to become a direct prelude to a proletarian revolution – which is what happened – or, under some kind of bourgeois oligarchic regime, to cast Russia back into a semi-colonial existence. Consequently, the period following the February overthrow can be seen in two ways: either as a period of consolidation, development or completion of the 'democratic' revolution, or as a period of preparation for the proletarian revolution. The former view was held not only by the Mensheviks and SRS, but also by a certain number of leading figures in our own party. The difference between them was that the latter strove to push the democratic revolution as far to the left as possible. But the method was essentially the same: 'pressure' on the bourgeoisie in power, while ensuring that this pressure did not go beyond the bounds of the bourgeois-democratic regime. If that policy had prevailed, the revolution would have developed without our party, and, in the final analysis, we would have achieved only a worker and peasant insurrection without any guidance from the party. In other words, we would have repeated the July Days on a huge scale, i.e. not as an episode but as a catastrophe.

It is perfectly obvious that the direct outcome of that catastrophe would have been the destruction of the party. This shows how deep the disagreements were at the time.

The influence of the Mensheviks and the SRS during the first period of the revolution was not, of course, accidental; it reflected the preponderance of the petty-bourgeois masses, the peasants mostly, in the people [*narod*], and the immaturity of the revolution itself. It was precisely the immaturity of the

revolution, in the context of the unique conditions created by the war, that handed the leadership to the petty-bourgeois revolutionaries, or at least the semblance of leadership, which consisted of their defence of the bourgeoisie's historical right to power. This does not mean at all, however, that the Russian revolution could only have taken the path it took from February to October 1917. The course taken resulted not only from class relations, but also from the temporary conditions created by the war. As a result of the war, the peasants were organised and armed in an army of many millions. Before the proletariat managed to organise itself under its own banner in order to carry the village masses along with it, the petty-bourgeois revolutionaries found a natural base in the army of peasants who had been enraged by the war. With the weight of this army of many millions – and, after all, everything depended directly on this army – the petty-bourgeois revolutionaries exerted pressure on the proletariat and carried them along for a while. That the revolution might have taken a different course, even with the very same class principles, is best demonstrated by events leading up to the war. In July 1914, Petrograd was shaken by revolutionary strikes. Open clashes were taking place in the streets. The leadership of that movement belonged indisputably to the underground organisation and the legal press of our party. Bolshevism strengthened its influence in a direct struggle against liquidationism [*likvidatorstvo*] and the petty-bourgeois parties in general. The further growth of the movement would have meant above all the growth of the Bolshevik Party. The Soviets of Workers' Deputies in 1914 – if things had got as far as the Soviets – would initially probably have been Bolshevik. The awakening of the village would have taken place under the direct and indirect leadership of the town Soviets led by Bolsheviks. This does not necessarily mean that the SRS would have been doomed to disappear immediately from the village; no, in all probability the first stage of the peasant revolution would have taken place under the populist [*narodnicheskii*] banner. But in light of the aforementioned development of events, the populists [*narodniki*] themselves would have been forced to push their left wing to seek an alliance [*smychka*] with the Bolshevik Soviets in the towns. Of course, in this case, the immediate outcome of the insurrection would also have depended on the mood and conduct of the army, which was closely tied to the peasantry. It is impossible to know, and there is no need to guess in retrospect, whether the movement of 1914–15 would have led to victory, had war not broken out and added a new gigantic link to the chain of development. However, much evidence indicates that if a victorious revolution had indeed developed in this way, beginning with the events of July 1914, the toppling of tsarism [*nizverzhenie tsarizma*] would probably have meant the immediate assumption of power by the revolutionary workers' Soviets, which,

thanks (in the very first days!) to the left populists [*levye narodniki*], would have drawn the peasant masses into their orbit.

The war interrupted the developing revolutionary movement, held it back, and then sped it up in extraordinary fashion. Through its creation of a multi-million man army, the war created for the petty-bourgeois parties a quite exceptional base, and not just a social but an organisational base as well. After all, a distinct feature of the peasantry, even when it is revolutionary, is that, for all its millions, it is difficult to transform into an organised base! The petty-bourgeois parties, standing on the shoulders of a ready-made organisation, the army, impressed the proletariat, clouding its mind with the idea of defencism [*oboronchestvo*]. That is why Lenin immediately spoke out furiously against the old slogan 'the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry', which under the new circumstances turned the Bolshevik party into the left wing of the defencist bloc. Lenin was mainly concerned with dragging the proletarian vanguard out of the swamp of defencism into the open. Only if this were done could the proletariat become – in the next stage – a nucleus around which the working masses in the countryside could group. But in that case what would become of the democratic revolution, or, more precisely, the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry? Lenin mercilessly refuted those 'Old Bolsheviks', who, he said, 'more than once already have played so regrettable a role in the history of our party by reiterating formulas senselessly *learned by rote* instead of *studying* the specific features of the new and living reality'. 'It is necessary to keep up not with old formulas, but with the new reality'. Lenin asked: 'Is this reality covered by comrade Kamenev's old-Bolshevik formula, which says that "the bourgeois-democratic revolution is not completed?" It is not. The formula is obsolete. It is no good at all. It is dead. And it is no use trying to revive it'.⁵

True, Lenin sometimes said that the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies in the first period of the February Revolution did *to a certain degree* embody the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. And this was true insofar as these Soviets generally embodied power. But as Lenin explained repeatedly, the Soviets of the February period embodied only half the power [*poluvlast'*]. They supported the power of the bourgeoisie, exerting a semi-oppositional [*poluoppozitsionnoe*] 'pressure' on it. And it was precisely this indeterminate state that did not allow them to transcend the framework of the democratic coalition of workers, peasants and

5 N. Lenin, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. XIV, part 1, p. 28 and 33 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1964b, pp. 44, 50].

soldiers. In the form of its rule, this coalition tended towards dictatorship insofar as it relied not upon regulated state [*gosudarstvennye*] relationships, but upon armed force and direct revolutionary supervision. It was, however, several measures short of actual dictatorship. It was precisely this democratic amorphousness of the half-powerful [*poluvlastnyi*] coalition of workers, peasants and soldiers that made the conciliationist [*soglashatel'skie*] Soviets unstable. They either had to cease to exist, or take power into their hands for real. But they could not take power as a democratic coalition of workers and peasants represented by various parties, but as a dictatorship of the proletariat led by a single party and carrying the peasant masses along with it, beginning with their semi-proletarian strata. In other words, a democratic worker-peasant coalition could take shape only as an immature form that had not advanced to real power. It was a tendency, not a fact. Any further move towards power inevitably had to tear away the democratic façade [*obolochka*], confront the majority of the peasantry with the need to follow the workers, and give the proletariat the chance to bring about a class dictatorship, thereby placing on the agenda, along with the complete and mercilessly radical democratisation of social relationships, a purely socialist incursion by the workers' state into the realm of capitalist property rights [*prava kapitalisticheskoi sobstvennosti*]. Those who, under these conditions, clung to the formula 'democratic dictatorship' were, in fact, refusing power and leading the revolution into a cul-de-sac.

The main point of contention on which everything hinged was whether to fight for power or not. This in itself shows that we were faced not with occasional differences of opinions, but with two tendencies based on fundamental matters of principle. One of these tendencies, the main one, was proletarian and led to the path of world revolution; the other was 'democratic', petty-bourgeois, and ultimately subordinated proletarian politics to the demands of a reformist bourgeois society. These two tendencies clashed bitterly over all issues of any substance throughout 1917. It is precisely the revolutionary era, i.e. the era when the party uses its accumulated capital, when these kinds of disagreements must be exposed in action. These two tendencies will reappear in the revolutionary period of all countries to a greater or lesser degree and with one or another deviation. If by Bolshevism, in its most salient aspect, we mean a kind of training, tempering, and organising of the proletarian vanguard, enabling it to seize power, with weapon in hand; and if by Social Democracy, we mean reformist oppositional activity within the context of a bourgeois society and an accommodation to its legality, i.e. actually educating the masses in the spirit of the stability of the bourgeois state, then it is absolutely clear that even within the Communist Party, which after all does not emerge fully forged from the furnace of history, the struggle between Social-Democratic tendencies and

Bolshevism is bound to be revealed more clearly, more openly and more recognisably at a time of immediate revolution when the question of power is being posed directly.



The task of conquering power [*zavoevanie vlasti*] was put to the party only on 4 April, i.e. after Lenin's arrival in Petrograd. But even after that, the party line was by no means unified, indissoluble, and indisputable for everyone. Despite the resolutions of the conference of April 1917, opposition to the revolutionary course – hidden or open – pervaded the entire period of preparation.

Studying the course of the disagreements between February and the consolidation of the October overthrow is not only of theoretical interest, but also has immeasurable practical significance. The disagreements revealed at the Second Congress in 1903 were described by Lenin in 1910 as an 'anticipation' [*antitsipatsiia*], i.e. foreshadowing [*predvoskhishchenie*]. It is very important to trace these disagreements from their origins, i.e. 1903, and even earlier, for example, from 'economism'. But this approach is only meaningful if it is taken to its logical conclusion and includes that period when the disagreements are put to the ultimate test, i.e. October.

Within the limits of this preface, we cannot undertake an exhaustive study of all stages of this struggle. But we feel it necessary to fill even partially the gaping hole that exists in our literature about the most important period in the development of our party.

At the heart of the disagreements, as we said, is the question of power. This is, in general, the touchstone of the revolutionary (and not only the revolutionary) party. Closely related to the question of power is the question of war which was resolved at this time. We will examine both questions chronologically according to the major landmarks: the position of the party and the party press in the first period after the overthrow of tsarism and before Lenin's return; the struggle after Lenin's Theses; the April Conference; the results of the July Days; the Kornilov affair [*Kornilovshchina*]; the Democratic Conference and the Pre-Parliament; the question of armed insurrection and seizure of power [*zakhvat vlasti*] (September–October); the question of a 'homogeneous' socialist government.

Study of these disagreements will hopefully allow us to draw significant conclusions for the benefit of the other parties in the Communist International.

The Struggle Against War and Defencism

The overthrow of tsarism in February 1917 of course signalled a gigantic leap forward. But to understand February only within the context of February, i.e. not as a step to October, would merely mean that Russia was becoming like, say, bourgeois republican France. Petty-bourgeois revolutionary parties, as is their wont, accepted the February revolution not as a bourgeois revolution, and not as a step towards a socialist revolution, but as having some kind of intrinsic 'democratic' value. It was on this notion that they constructed the ideology of revolutionary defencism. They were not defending the rule [*gospodstvo*] of one or another class, but 'revolution' and 'democracy'. But even in our own party, the revolutionary momentum of February initially led to an extraordinary confusion of political perspectives. As a matter of fact, in the March days *Pravda* was far closer to the positions of revolutionary defencism than to the positions of Lenin.

'When one army confronts another army', we read in one of the editorials, 'the most absurd policy would be for one of them to lay down their arms and go home. Such a policy would not be a policy of peace, but a policy of enslavement, a policy which a free people would indignantly reject. No, it will hold firmly to its position, meeting bullet with bullet and shell with shell. That is inevitable ... We must not permit any disorganisation of the fighting forces of the revolution' ('No Secret Diplomacy', *Pravda*, no. 9, 15 March 1917). There is no mention here of classes, of the oppressors and the oppressed, but of a 'free people'; no mention of classes fighting for power, but of a free people 'hold[ing] firmly to its position'. The ideas and formulations are defencist throughout! Later in this article: 'our slogan is not the disorganisation of the revolutionary army and of the army that is becoming revolutionary, nor is it the empty cry "Down with the War". Our motto is – bring pressure to bear (!) on the Provisional Government with the aim of forcing it openly, in the face of world democracy (!), to try (!) without fail to incline (!) all warring countries immediately to open negotiations about ways of ending the world war. Until then everyone (!) is to remain at their fighting post (!)'. The programme of exerting pressure on an imperialist government, so as to 'incline' it to a pious course of action, was the programme of Kautsky and [Georg] Ledebour in Germany, of Jean Longuet in France, of MacDonald in England, but in no way the programme of Bolshevism. The article concludes not only with a 'hearty welcome' to the notorious manifesto of the Petrograd Soviet, 'To All the Peoples of the World', (a manifesto permeated with the spirit of revolutionary defencism), it also notes 'with pleasure' the editorial board's solidarity with the openly defencist resolutions of two Petrograd meetings [*mitingi*]. Suf-

fice it to say that one of these resolutions declares: 'If German and Austrian democracy [*demokratiia*] will not listen to our voice (i.e. the voice of the Provisional Government and of the conciliationist Soviet – L.T.), we will defend our motherland [*rodina*] to the last drop of blood' (*Pravda*, no. 9, 15 March 1917).⁶

This article is not an exception. On the contrary, it expresses perfectly accurately the position of *Pravda* prior to Lenin's return to Russia. Thus, in the next issue of the newspaper, the article 'On War', while offering some critical remarks about the 'Manifesto to the Peoples', declares at the same time: 'It is impossible not to welcome yesterday's proclamation by the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies in Petrograd which calls on the peoples of the whole world to force their governments to end the slaughter' (*Pravda*, no. 10, 16 March 1917). But where is the way out of this war? This article answers this question in the following way: 'The way out is by exerting pressure on the Provisional Government with the demand that it agree immediately to begin peace negotiations' (*ibid.*).⁷

These kinds of quotations, which conceal their defencism and mask their conciliationism, are not hard to find. At this time, or rather a week earlier, Lenin, not yet having managed to break out of his cage in Zurich,⁸ railed in his 'Letters from Afar' (most of which had not reached *Pravda*) against any suggestions of concessions to defencism and conciliationism. 'It is absolutely impermissible', he wrote on 8 (21) March, glimpsing the revolutionary events through the distorted mirror of the capitalist media, 'to conceal from ourselves and from the people that this government wants to continue the imperialist war, that it is an agent of British capital, that it wants to restore the monarchy and strengthen the rule of the landlords and capitalists' (*Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, no. 7 (30), p. 299).⁹ And later, on 12 (25) March: 'To urge that government to conclude a democratic peace is like preaching virtue to brothel keepers' (*ibid.*). At a time when *Pravda* was calling for 'pressure' on the Provisional Government to force it to make a stand for peace 'before the entire world democracy', Lenin was writing: 'Hence, to urge the Guchkov-Milyukov government to conclude a speedy, honest, democratic and good-neighbourly peace is like the good village

6 'Bez tainoi diplomatii', *Pravda*, no. 9, 15 March (28 March), 1917, pp. 2–3.

7 'O voine', *Pravda*, no. 10, 16 March (29 March), 1917, pp. 2–3.

8 Lenin lived in exile in Zurich, Switzerland from February 1916 until his return to Russia in April 1917. The dissident writer, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, wrote a scathing account of Lenin at this period of his life (Solzhenitsyn 1976).

9 Lenin 1964c, p. 315.

priest [*batiushka*] urging the landlords and the merchants to "walk in the way of God", to love their neighbours and to turn the other cheek' (ibid., pp. 244–5).¹⁰

On 4 April, the day after his arrival in Petrograd, Lenin came out decisively against *Pravda*'s position on the question of war and peace: 'No support for the Provisional Government', he wrote. 'The utter falsity of all its promises should be made clear, particularly of those relating to the renunciation of annexations. Exposure in place of the impermissible, illusion-breeding 'demand' that *this* government, a government of capitalists, should *cease* to be an imperialist government' (vol. XIV, part 1, p. 18).¹¹ There is no need to add that the proclamation of the conciliationists of 14 March, which elicited such congratulatory sentiments from *Pravda*, was described by Lenin as nothing other than 'notorious' and 'muddled'. It is the height of hypocrisy to call on other nations to break with their own bankers and at the same time to form a coalition government with the bankers of one's own country. 'The Centre', says Lenin in a draft of the platform, 'all vow and declare that they are Marxists and internationalists, that they are for peace, for bringing every kind of "pressure" to bear upon the governments, for "demanding" in every way that their own government should "ascertain the will of the people for peace"' (vol. XIV, part 1, p. 52).¹²

But surely – one might object at first blush – a revolutionary party should 'put pressure on' the bourgeoisie and its government? Certainly not. Exerting pressure on a bourgeois government is the road to reform. The Marxist revolutionary party does not reject reform. But the road to reform is useful only for secondary questions, not for primary ones. Reform cannot bring power. It is impossible to 'pressure' the bourgeoisie to change its policy on an issue with which its entire fate is linked. The war created a revolutionary situation by dint of the fact that it left no room for any reformist 'pressure': it was necessary to support the bourgeoisie to the end, or raise the masses against it with the aim of tearing power from its grasp. In the former instance, the bourgeoisie would have handed out some scraps or other on domestic policy, in return for unconditional support for their foreign imperialist policy. For this very reason, socialist reformism openly transformed itself into socialist imperialism from the start of the war. For this very reason, the truly revolutionary elements were forced to start creating a new International.

¹⁰ Lenin 1964c, pp. 334, 336.

¹¹ Lenin 1964d, p. 22.

¹² Lenin 1964e, p. 76.

Pravda's viewpoint was not proletarian and revolutionary but democratic and defencist, although it was half-hearted in its defencism. We toppled tsarism, we are putting pressure on the democratic power. The latter must propose peace to the peoples of the world. If German democracy cannot bring due pressure to bear on its government, then we shall defend our 'motherland [*rodina*]' to the last drop of blood. The goal of peace was not made into an independent task for the working class, to be accomplished above and beyond the bourgeois Provisional Government, because the conquest of power by the proletariat was not made into a practical, revolutionary task. Furthermore, the one cannot be separated from the other.

The April Conference

Lenin's speech at the Finland Station about the socialist character of the Russian Revolution came as a bombshell to many party leaders. The polemic between Lenin and the supporters of 'achieving a democratic revolution' began from that very first day. A sharp conflict arose around the armed demonstrations in April with their slogan 'Down with the Provisional Government!' That episode caused some representatives of the right wing to accuse Lenin of Blanquism: the overthrow of the Provisional Government, which was at that time supported by the Soviet majority, could be achieved, if you please, only by circumventing the majority of the toilers [*trudiashchikhsia*]. In formal terms the accusation might not have been unpersuasive, but in fact there was not a shadow of Blanquism in Lenin's April policy. For him, the whole question hinged on how much the Soviets continued to reflect the real mood of the masses, and whether the party was deceiving itself by orientating itself to the Soviet majority. The April demonstration, which moved more to 'the left' than was expected, was a reconnaissance sortie to survey the mood of the masses and the relationship between them and the Soviet majority. The reconnaissance led to the conclusion that a long period of preparation was needed. We saw how roughly Lenin brought the Kronstadters into line at the start of May, when they went too far and refused to recognise the Provisional Government. Those who opposed the struggle for power took a totally different approach. At the party conference in April, comrade Kamenev complained: 'In *Pravda*, no. 19, a resolution was first proposed by comrades (apparently referring to Lenin. L.T.) that we should overthrow the Provisional Government. It was printed before the recent crisis, but this slogan was later rejected as disruptive, as an adventure [*avantiuristskii*]. This means that our comrades learned something during this crisis. The present resolution (i.e. the

resolution proposed by Lenin at the conference. L.T.) repeats that mistake'.¹³ That is a highly significant way of putting it. Lenin, having surveyed the situation, shelved the call for the immediate overthrow of the Provisional Government, but only for weeks or months, depending on how rapidly the masses' indignation against the conciliators would grow. The opposition [*oppozitsiia*], however, viewed this as a mistake. In Lenin's temporary retreat, there was not even a hint of a change of course. He was not proceeding from the assumption that the democratic revolution was not yet completed, but exclusively from the fact that the masses were not yet capable of overthrowing the Provisional Government today, and that therefore everything had to be done to make the working class capable of toppling the Provisional Government tomorrow.

The entire April Conference of the party was devoted to this fundamental issue: should we move to take power [*zavoevanie vlasti*] in the name of a socialist overthrow, or should we help (somebody) finish the democratic revolution. Unfortunately, the report of the April Conference has not yet been published, and yet hardly any of the congresses in the history of our party had such exceptional and immediate significance for the fate of the revolution as the April Conference of 1917.¹⁴

This was Lenin's position: irreconcilable struggle with defencism and defencists; gain majorities in the Soviets; overthrow the Provisional Government; seize power through the Soviets; a revolutionary policy of peace; and a programme of socialist overthrow at home and international revolution abroad. In contrast, as we know, the opposition took the position that it was necessary to complete the democratic revolution by putting pressure on the Provisional Government, with the Soviets remaining as organs of 'supervision [*kontrol'*]' over bourgeois power. From this flows quite another incomparably more conciliatory attitude towards defencism.

One of the opponents of Lenin's position made the following objection at the April Conference:

We speak of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies as the organising centres of our strength and power ... This very description shows that they constitute a bloc of petty-bourgeois and proletarian forces, which

13 *Sed'maia* 1958, p. 109. The reference may be to B. Avilov, 'Oni i my', *Pravda*, no. 19, 28 March (10 April), 1917, pp. 3–4.

14 Many of these protocols would be published in 1925 soon after the 'literary discussion' (Trotskii 1991, p. 340, n. 17).

are still faced with the unfinished tasks of bourgeois democracy. If the bourgeois-democratic revolution had been accomplished, this bloc would not have existed ... and the proletariat would have fought a revolutionary struggle against the bloc ... And yet we recognise these Soviets as centres for the organisation of forces ... This means that the bourgeois revolution is not yet over, has not yet outlived itself, and I think that we should all recognise the fact that, with the full accomplishment of this revolution, power would actually have passed into the hands of the proletariat.

comrade KAMENEV's speech¹⁵

The hopeless schematicism of this argument is perfectly clear: the point is, after all, that there can never be a 'full accomplishment of this revolution' without a change in the holders of power. The aforementioned speech ignores the class core of the revolution: the tasks of the party are not being defined by the actual configuration of the class forces, but by the formal definition of the revolution as bourgeois or bourgeois-democratic. We must form a bloc with the petty bourgeoisie and exercise supervision over bourgeois power until the bourgeois revolution is completed. This is a clearly Menshevik scheme. In limiting, for doctrinaire reasons, the tasks of the revolution to its designation ('bourgeois' revolution), it was impossible not to end up with a policy of supervising the Provisional Government, demanding that the Provisional Government put forward a programme of peace without annexations, etc. It was understood that the democratic revolution would be completed by a series of reforms through the Constituent Assembly, in which the Bolshevik party was to be assigned the role of left wing. The notion stripped the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets' of any real meaning. The late Nogin, also a member of the opposition, spoke best, most consistently, and most thoughtfully about this at the April Conference:

In the process of development, the most important functions of the Soviets will fall away. A whole range of administrative functions will pass to urban, rural [*zemskie*] and other institutions. If we examine the further development of the structure of the state, we cannot deny that the Constituent Assembly will be convened, and after that the Parliament ... In this way then, the most important functions of the Soviets will die out; but this does not mean that the Soviets will end their existence in disgrace.

15 *Sed'maia* 1958, pp. 80–1.

They will have merely handed over their functions. While such Soviets exist, we shall not achieve the Republic-Commune in our country.¹⁶

Finally, a third opponent took the view that Russia was not ready for socialism: 'Can we count on the support of the masses if we raise the slogan of proletarian revolution? Russia is the most petty-bourgeois country in Europe. It is not possible to count on the sympathy of the masses for a socialist revolution, and the more the party stands for a socialist revolution, the more it will turn itself into a propagandist circle [*kruzhok*]. The push towards social revolution [*sotsial'naia revoliutsiia*] should come from the West'. And further on, 'Where will the sun of the socialist overthrow rise? I think, given all the conditions and the philistine [*obyvatel'skii*] level, the initiative for the socialist overthrow will not belong to us. In our country neither the forces nor the objective conditions exist. And to the West this problem means about the same as the overthrow of tsarism meant to us'.¹⁷

Not all of the opponents of Lenin's viewpoint came to Nogin's conclusions at the April Conference. The logic of events however forced them all to accept these conclusions several months later, on the eve of October. Either lead the proletarian revolution, or become the opposition in a bourgeois parliament: that is how things stood in our party. It is quite obvious that this latter position was essentially the Menshevik position, or rather, the position which the Mensheviks ended up having to take after the February overthrow. Indeed, the Menshevik woodpeckers [*diatly*] had been banging on for years about how the coming revolution had to be bourgeois, how the government of the bourgeois revolution had to carry out only bourgeois tasks, how Social Democracy could not take on the tasks of bourgeois democracy and how it should stay in the opposition and 'push the bourgeoisie to the left'. Martynov developed this theme with particularly mind-numbing profundity. With the onset of the bourgeois revolution in 1917, the Mensheviks quickly joined the government. All that remained of their 'principled' positions was the political conclusion that the proletariat would not be able to attempt power [*posiagat' na vlast'*]. Yet it is perfectly obvious that those Bolsheviks who exposed Menshevik ministerialism [*ministerializm*] and who at the same time spoke out against the seizure of power by the proletariat, were in fact shifting to the pre-revolutionary positions of the Mensheviks.

16 *Sed'maia* 1958, pp. 102–3.

17 *Sed'maia* 1958, pp. 106, 107 respectively.

The revolution caused political shifts in two directions: those on the right became Kadets, the Kadets became republicans against their will, – a purely formal shift to the left; the SRs and Mensheviks became the ruling bourgeois party, a shift to the right. In such ways does a bourgeois society try to create for itself a new pillar of power, stability and order. But at the same time as the Mensheviks moved from a formally socialist position to a vulgarly democratic position, the right wing of the Bolsheviks moved to a formally socialist position, i.e. to yesterday's Menshevik position.

The same reconfiguration of forces occurred on the question of the war. The bourgeoisie, with the exception of a few doctrinaires, despondently kept up the refrain: no annexations and indemnities, all the more when there was little hope of any annexations. The Mensheviks and the SR-Zimmerwaldists, who had criticised the French socialists for defending their own bourgeois republican fatherland [*otechestvo*], immediately became defencists once they felt themselves to be in a bourgeois republic: they moved from being passively internationalist to actively patriotic. At the same time, the right wing of the Bolsheviks took a passively internationalist position – exerting 'pressure' on the Provisional Government to secure a democratic peace 'without annexations and indemnities'. In that way, at the April Conference the formula of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry fell apart both theoretically and politically and produced two hostile viewpoints: a democratic one, camouflaged in formal socialist reservations, and a social revolutionary [*sotsial'no-revoliutsionnyi*] one, a truly Bolshevik, Leninist viewpoint.

The July Days, the *Kornilov Affair*, the Democratic Conference and the Pre-parliament

The decisions of the April Conference provided the party with the correct principles, but they did not remove the disagreements at the top. On the contrary, as events developed, they inevitably became even more concrete, becoming most acute at the most crucial moment of the revolution, the Days of October.

The attempt, on Lenin's initiative, to organise a demonstration on 10 June, was denounced as adventurism [*avantiurizm*] by those comrades who were dissatisfied with the nature of the April demonstration. The 10 June demonstration did not take place because it was forbidden by the Congress of Soviets. On 18 June, though, the party had its revenge: the general demonstration in Petrograd, which the conciliationists had rather recklessly called for, happened almost exclusively under Bolshevik banners. But the government tried to have

its way: it launched an idiotically frivolous attack at the front. This was a decisive moment. Lenin cautioned the party against rash actions. On 21 June he wrote in *Pravda*: 'Comrades, a demonstration [*vystuplenie*] now would be inexpedient. We now have to live through a whole new stage in our revolution' (vol. XIV, part 1, p. 276).¹⁸ But then the July Days came, an important landmark on the road to revolution and on the road to disagreements within the party.

In the July movement, the moment of spontaneous pressure by the Petrograd masses played a crucial role. Lenin, no doubt, asked himself the following questions in July. Has the time come? Has the mood of the masses outgrown the structures of the Soviets? Are we running the risk of being hypnotised by Soviet legality, of lagging behind the mood of the masses, and of being cut off from them? It is highly likely that certain purely military actions during the July Days were carried out by comrades who sincerely believed that they were not straying from a Leninist view of the situation. Lenin said later: 'In July we committed a lot of blunders'.¹⁹ But this time too the affair boiled down to a new and broader reconnaissance at a new, higher stage of the movement. We had to retreat, and brutally so. The party, insofar as it was preparing to rise up and seize power, saw, as did Lenin, the July demonstration merely as an episode in which we paid dearly to find out the state of our own forces and those of the enemy, but which should not deflect us from our general course of action. On the other hand, those comrades who opposed the policy of seizing power could not but regard the July episode as a harmful adventure. The right-wing elements of the party became more mobilised, their criticism more resolute. The very tone of their resistance changed accordingly. Lenin wrote: 'All this whining, all these arguments to the effect that we "should not have" participated (in the attempt to lend a "peaceable and organised character" to the perfectly legitimate popular discontent and indignation!!) are either sheer apostasy [*renegatstvo*], if coming from Bolsheviks, or the usual expression of the usual cowed and confused state of the petty bourgeoisie' (v. XIV, part 2, p. 28).²⁰ The use of the word 'apostasy' at that moment put the disagreements in a tragic light. With time, this ominous word is heard more and more frequently.

Of course, the opportunistic attitude to the question of power and to the war determined the corresponding attitude to the International. Those on the right tried to get the party to participate in the Stockholm Conference

18 'S'ezd Sovetov i Peterburgskie rabochie', *Pravda*, no. 87, 4 July (21 June OS), 1917, p. 3. I have been unable to locate this in Lenin's *Collected Works*.

19 Trotsky recalls Lenin saying this in private conversations and to German delegates to the Third International after the March uprising of 1921 in Germany (Trotsky 1971, p. 90).

20 Lenin 1964f, p. 206.

of social-patriots. On 16 August, Lenin wrote: 'The speech made by comrade Kamenev on August 6 in the Central Executive Committee on the Stockholm Conference cannot but meet with reproof from all Bolsheviks who are faithful to their Party and principles' (v. XIV, part 2, p. 56).²¹ Further on, regarding the statement that the broad revolutionary banner was beginning to wave over Stockholm, he said: 'This is a meaningless declamation in the spirit of [Viktor] Chernov and [Iraklii] Tsereteli. It is a blatant untruth. In actual fact, it is not the revolutionary banner that is beginning to wave over Stockholm, but the banner of deals, agreements, amnesty for the social-imperialists, and negotiations among bankers for dividing up annexed territory' (ibid., p. 57).²²

The road to Stockholm was essentially the road to the Second International, just as participating in the Pre-parliament was the road to a bourgeois republic. Lenin was in favour of boycotting the Stockholm Conference, just as he was later in favour of boycotting the Pre-parliament. In the heat of the struggle, he did not forget for a single moment the task of creating a new Communist International.

Already on 10 April, Lenin spoke about changing the name of the party. He brushed aside all objections to the new name: 'It is an argument of routinism, an argument of inertia, an argument of stagnation'. He insisted: 'It is time to cast off the soiled shirt and to put on clean linen'.²³ Nonetheless, opposition from the heads of the party was so strong that it took a year, during which all Russia threw off the dirty clothing of bourgeois domination, before the party could make up its mind to change its name, having returned to the tradition of Marx and Engels. This story of the renaming of the party is a symbolic expression of Lenin's role throughout 1917: at history's sharpest turn, he was always waging a tense battle inside the party against the day that is already gone and in the name of the day that is to come. And the opposition from the past, operating under the banner of 'tradition', became extremely animated at times.

The Kornilov Affair, which brought a sharp improvement in our fortunes, temporarily softened the disagreements; they were softened but not eliminated. During those days, the right wing was inclined to get closer to the Soviet majority by defending the revolution and in part the motherland [*rodina*]. Lenin reacted to this at the start of September in a letter to the Central Committee: 'It is my conviction', he wrote,

21 Lenin 1964g, p. 244.

22 Lenin 1964g, p. 245.

23 Lenin 1964e, p. 88.

that those who become unprincipled are people who [...] slide into defencism²⁴ or (like other Bolsheviks) into a *bloc* with the S.R.s, into *supporting* the Provisional Government. Their attitude is absolutely wrong and unprincipled. We shall become defencists *only after* the transfer of power to the proletariat.

And later on:

Even now we must not support Kerensky's government. This is unprincipled. We may be asked: aren't we going to fight against Kornilov? Of course we must! But this is not the same thing: there is a dividing line here, which is being stepped over by some Bolsheviks who fall into compromise [*soglashatel'stvo*] and allow themselves to be *carried away* by the course of events.

v. XIV, part 2, p. 95²⁵

The next stage in the evolution of disagreements was the Democratic Conference (14–22 September), and the Pre-parliament (7 October) that emerged from it. It was the aim of the Mensheviks and SRS, having bound the Bolsheviks to Soviet legality, to transform that legality painlessly into bourgeois parliamentary legality. Those on the right welcomed this. Above, we have already heard their description of the further development of the revolution: the Soviets will gradually hand over their functions to the corresponding institutions – the dumas, zemstvos, trade unions, and finally the Constituent Assembly – and, having done so, will leave the stage. Working through the Pre-parliament was supposed to direct the political thinking of the masses away from the Soviets as 'temporary' institutions that had outlived their time, and towards the Constituent Assembly as the crowning achievement of the democratic revolution. The Bolsheviks, in the meantime, were already in the majority in the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets; our influence in the army was growing not by the day but by the hour. It was no longer a matter of a forecast or of long-term goals but of choosing a course of action literally for tomorrow.

The conduct of the now threadbare conciliationist parties at the Democratic Conference was the epitome of pathetic hopelessness. Meanwhile, our proposal demonstratively to abandon the Democratic Conference as a clearly

24 This is apparently a reference to names that have been omitted here, as the following sentence shows. L.T. [original footnote].

25 Lenin 1964h, pp. 285–6. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: '(like Volodarsky)'.

wretched place, met with decisive opposition from right-wing elements of the faction who were still influential at the top of the party at the time. The clashes over this question were a prelude to the fight that broke out over the question of boycotting the Pre-parliament. On 24 September, i.e. after the Democratic Conference, Lenin wrote: 'The Bolsheviks should have walked out of the meeting in protest and not allowed themselves to be caught by the conference trap set to divert the people's attention from serious questions' (v. XIV, part 2, p. 144).²⁶

The discussions in the Bolshevik faction of the Democratic Conference on the question of boycotting the Pre-parliament were exceptionally significant, despite the relatively limited nature of the subject. Essentially, this was the most extensive and outwardly successful attempt by those on the right to put the party onto the path of 'completing the democratic revolution'. Apparently, no minutes of the discussions were kept, or in any event have not been preserved; as far as I know, no secretarial notes have been found yet. Some very meagre materials have been found in my papers by the editors of this volume. Comrade Kamenev deployed an argument which later, in sharper and clearer form, formed the content of a well-known letter from Kamenev and Zinoviev to the party organisations (11 October). Nogin formulated the question in the most principled way: the boycott of the Pre-parliament is a call to insurrection, i.e. a repeat of the July Days. Some comrades continued to adhere to the general principles of the parliamentary tactics of Social Democracy: 'No one would dare', their views might roughly be expressed, 'to propose a boycott of the parliament; but we are being asked to boycott the same institution merely because it has the name *Pre-parliament*'.

The rightists' basic view was that the revolution leads inevitably from the Soviets to bourgeois parliamentarianism, that the 'Pre-parliament' is the natural link in that process, and that there was no reason to refuse to take part in the Pre-parliament in view of our readiness to occupy the left benches in parliament. It was necessary to finish the democratic revolution and '*get ready for*' the socialist revolution. But how to get ready? By going through the school of bourgeois parliamentarianism: after all, the advanced countries show the backward countries the image of their future. The overthrow of tsarism is conceived of in a revolutionary way, just as it happened; but the conquest of power by the proletariat is conceived of in parliamentary terms, on the basis of a completed democracy. The democratic regime should last for many years before the bourgeois revolution gives way to a proletarian revolution. The struggle for participation in the Pre-parliament was a struggle for the 'Europeanisation'

26 Lenin 1964i, p. 48.

[*evropeizatsiia*] of the workers' movement, to put it as quickly as possibly onto the course of the democratic 'struggle for power', i.e. onto a social-democratic course. The faction in the Democratic Conference, numbering over a hundred people, was no different at all, especially at that time, from a party congress. A good half of the faction was in favour of participating in the Pre-parliament. This fact alone was sufficient cause for alarm, and from that moment Lenin sounded the alarm continuously.

During the days of the Democratic Conference, Lenin wrote: 'It would be a big mistake, sheer parliamentary cretinism on our part, if we were to regard the Democratic Conference as a parliament; for even *if it were* to proclaim itself a permanent and sovereign parliament of the revolution, it would nevertheless *decide nothing*. The power of decision lies *outside it* in the working-class quarters of Petrograd and Moscow' (v. XIV, part 2, p. 138).²⁷ Lenin's view of the importance of participating or not participating in the Pre-parliament can be seen from many of his statements, and especially from his letter to the Central Committee on 29 September, in which he speaks of 'such glaring errors on the part of the Bolsheviks as the shameful decision to participate in the Pre-parliament'.²⁸ For him, that decision revealed the same democratic illusions and petty-bourgeois vacillations, against which he had developed and defined his own conception of proletarian revolution. It was not true that many years had to elapse between the bourgeois and the proletarian revolutions. It was not true that the school of parliamentarianism was the only, the basic, or the necessary school of preparation for the conquest of power. It was not true that the road to power inevitably ran through bourgeois democracy. These were all naked abstractions, doctrinaire schemes, whose political purpose was merely to bind the hands and feet of the proletarian vanguard, to render it – via the 'democratic' state machine – a political shadow of the bourgeoisie in the opposition: this is Social Democracy. The politics of the proletariat had to be guided not by academic schemes, but by the actual course of the class struggle. Our task was not to join the Pre-parliament, but to organise an insurrection and extract [*vyrvat'*] power. The rest would follow. Having promoted the boycott of the Pre-parliament as a platform, Lenin even suggested calling an extraordinary congress of the party. From this moment on, all of his letters and articles struck one note: we had to move not into the Pre-parliament, the 'revolutionary' tail of the conciliationists, but onto the streets – to fight for power!

27 Lenin 1964j, p. 25.

28 Lenin 1964k, p. 84.

On the October Overthrow

An extraordinary congress turned out to be unnecessary. The pressure from Lenin pushed the forces to the left both in the Central Committee and in the faction of the Pre-parliament. The Bolsheviks withdrew from it on 10 October. In Petrograd, a conflict arose between the Soviet and the government over the dispatch of Bolshevik-minded garrison units to the front. On 16 October, the Military Revolutionary Committee [*Voenno-Revoliutsionnyi Komitet*], the legal Soviet organ of the insurrection, was created. The right wing of the party sought to delay the development of events. The struggle of tendencies within the party, like the struggle of classes within the country, was entering a crucial phase. The essence of the position of those on the right was most completely captured by a letter 'On the Current Situation' signed by Zinoviev and Kamenev. Written on 11 October, i.e. two weeks before the overthrow, and circulated to the most important organisations of the party, the letter took a decisive stand against the resolution on armed insurrection passed by the Central Committee. Warning against underestimating the enemy, and at the same time monstrously underestimating the forces of revolution and even dismissing the existence of a fighting mood among the masses (two weeks before 25 October!), the letter noted: 'We are deeply convinced that to declare an armed insurrection now would mean to risk not just the fate of our party, but the fate of the Russian and international revolution as well'. But if an insurrection and a seizure of power was not on, then what was? The letter answered this question quite clearly. 'Through the army, through the workers, we hold a revolver to the bourgeoisie's head; and with the revolver at its temple, it would not be able to ruin the Constituent Assembly. 'Our party's chances at the elections to the Constituent Assembly are excellent ... The influence of Bolshevism is growing ... With the right tactics, we can get a third and more of the seats in the Constituent Assembly'. In this way, the letter openly hewed to the role of an 'influential' opposition in the bourgeois Constituent Assembly. This purely Social-Democratic course was camouflaged in the following idea: 'The Soviets, which have become an intimate part of life, cannot be destroyed ... Only on the Soviets can the Constituent Assembly base its revolutionary work. The Constituent Assembly and the Soviets are the combined form of state institutions towards which we are moving'.²⁹ It is extremely interesting to note in this characterisation of the overall course taken by the right that the theory of 'combined' statehood [*kombinirovannaia gosudarstvennost'*], combining the

29 'K tekushchemu momentu', in *Protokoly* 1958, pp. 87–8.

Constituent Assembly with the Soviets, was repeated one and a half to two years later in Germany by Rudolf Hilferding, who was also fighting against a seizure of power by the proletariat. The Austro-German opportunist did not realise that he was plagiarising.

The letter 'On the Current Situation' contested the assertion that the majority of the people [*narod*] in Russia were already behind us, and regarded the majority as purely parliamentary-minded. 'Most of the workers are for us in Russia', noted the letter, 'as well as a significant number of soldiers. But a question mark exists over all the rest. We are quite certain, for example, that if elections to the Constituent Assembly were held now, a majority of the peasants would vote for the SRS. Is this by chance?'³⁰ This position made a basic and fundamental mistake, resulting from a failure to understand that the peasants could possess powerful revolutionary interests and intensely strive to fulfil them, but they could not have an independent political position: the peasantry could either vote for the bourgeoisie, through its SR agents, or actively join the proletariat. It depended precisely on our policies which of these two possibilities would materialise. If we had gone to the Pre-parliament in order to influence matters as an opposition ('a third and more of the seats') in the Constituent Assembly, we would have almost automatically placed the peasantry in the position of having to seek satisfaction of its interests through the Constituent Assembly, and consequently not through the opposition but through its majority. On the other hand, the seizure of power by the proletariat immediately created the revolutionary framework for a peasant struggle against the landowner [*pomeshchik*] and the public official [*chinovnik*]. To use the words that come most easily to us on this question, the letter at the same time *underestimated* and *overestimated* the peasantry: it underestimated its revolutionary potential (with proletarian leadership!) and overestimated its political independence. This double error, simultaneously underestimating and overestimating the peasantry, derived in turn from an underestimation of one's own class and its party, i.e. from the social-democratic approach to the proletariat. There is nothing surprising in this. In the final analysis, all shades of opportunism came down to an incorrect evaluation of the revolutionary energy and potential of the proletariat.

Objecting to the seizure of power, the letter scared the party with the prospect of a revolutionary war. 'The soldiers support us not for our slogan of war, but for our slogan of peace ... If we, having taken power on our own, find it necessary, by virtue of the whole world situation, to wage revolutionary war,

30 'K tekushchemu momentu', in *Protokoly* 1958, p. 88.

then the mass of the soldiers will abandon us. Of course, the best part of the young soldiers will stay with us, but the mass of soldiers will go'.³¹ This argument is very revealing. We see here the basic reasons used to justify the signing of the peace of Brest-Litovsk. But here these reasons were being used against the seizure of power. It is crystal clear that the position articulated in the letter 'On the Current Situation' made it much easier for those who held the views expressed in the letter to accept the peace of Brest-Litovsk. It only remains for us to repeat here what we said about this elsewhere, namely that it was Lenin's political genius not to take the temporary capitulation at Brest-Litovsk in isolation but to see it in combination with October. This should not be forgotten.

The working class struggles and matures in the sure knowledge that the enemy has the upper hand over it. This is revealed every day at every step. The enemy has wealth, power, all the means of ideological pressure, all the instruments of repression. This habit of thinking that the enemy's power is superior to ours is part and parcel of the entire life and work of the revolutionary party in its preparatory stage. The consequences of any careless or premature actions are the cruellest reminders of the enemy's strength at every turn. But the time comes when this habit of seeing the enemy as stronger becomes a major obstacle on the road to victory. Today's weakness of the bourgeoisie seems hidden by the shadow of its strength of yesterday. 'You are underestimating the power of the enemy!' All those who are hostile to an armed insurrection group around this idea. 'Anyone who does not just want to talk about an insurrection', wrote our opponents of the insurrection two weeks before victory,

is obliged to weigh up its chances soberly. Here we feel it is our duty to say that at the present moment it would be most harmful to underestimate the forces of the enemy and overestimate our own forces. The forces of the enemy are greater than they seem. Petrograd will decide, but in Petrograd the enemies of the proletarian party have gathered considerable forces: five thousand junkers, splendidly equipped, organised, and willing, and who, by virtue of their class position, know how to fight; a general staff [*shtab*]; shock troops; Cossacks; a good portion of the garrison; and a very significant portion of the artillery deployed in a fan around Petrograd. Then the enemy, with the aid of the CEC [Central Executive Committee of the Soviets], will almost certainly try to recall troops from the front.

'On the Current Situation'³²

31 'K tekushchemu momentu', in *Protokoly* 1958, p. 88.

32 'K tekushchemu momentu', in *Protokoly* 1958, p. 91.

Of course, in the event of civil war, it is not merely a matter of counting up battalions, but of making a preliminary assessment of their consciousness [*soznanie*]. Such an assessment can never be completely reliable or accurate. Even Lenin believed that the enemy had serious forces in Petrograd, and proposed starting the insurrection in Moscow, where, in his estimation, it could take place without bloodshed. Such individual mistakes of foresight are quite unavoidable in the best of circumstances, and it is wiser to plan for less propitious conditions. But what interests us now is the fact that the enemy forces were monstrously overestimated and their size was completely distorted at a time when the enemy in fact had no armed forces at all.

This question, as the experience in Germany showed, has huge significance. As long as the cry for an insurrection had mainly, if not exclusively, propaganda significance for the leaders of the German Communist Party, they simply ignored the question of the enemy's armed forces (Reichswehr, fascist units, police). They felt that the inexorably rising revolutionary tide would resolve the military question on its own. But when the task became more immediate, those same comrades who had believed that the armed forces of the enemy were something of a myth, immediately went to the other extreme: they blindly accepted all the figures of the armed forces of the bourgeoisie, carefully supplemented them with the forces of the Reichswehr and police, and then rounded them up to half a million and more. In this way, they ended up with a compact force, armed to the teeth, and quite sufficient to paralyse their own forces. Without doubt, the forces of the German counter-revolution were considerable, and in any event better organised and trained than our own Kornilovites and semi-Kornilovites. But so were the effective forces of the German revolution. The proletariat formed the overwhelming majority of the population of Germany. In our own case, the insurrection was decided by Petrograd and Moscow, at least initially. In Germany, the insurrection would immediately have had dozens of powerful proletarian hotbeds. Against this backdrop, the armed forces of the enemy would have looked by no means as terrible as the rounded-up statistics suggested. Anyway, we must categorically reject those tendentious calculations that were made and continue to be made after the defeat of the German October [*nemetskaia Oktiabria*] as a way of justifying the policy that led to that defeat. Our Russian example has unique significance here: for two weeks before our bloodless victory in Petrograd – and we could have had this victory two weeks earlier – experienced politicians of our party saw arrayed against us junkers, willing and able to fight, shock troops, Cossacks, a good part of the garrison, the artillery deployed in a fan, and troops coming from the front. And, in fact, it all turned out to be nothing, zero. Now let us imagine for a moment that the opponents of insurrection had prevailed

in the party and in its Central Committee. The part played by leadership in the Civil War is all too clear: in this situation, the revolution would have been doomed from the start unless Lenin had appealed to the party against the Central Committee, something he was intending to do, and something that would have undoubtedly been successful. But not every party will have its own Lenin in similar circumstances ... It is not hard to imagine how history would have been written if the political course of refusing to fight had prevailed in the Central Committee. The officious [*ofitsioznyi*] historians would of course have portrayed the insurrection in October 1917 as the purest madness, and they would have furnished the reader with stunning sets of statistics on junkers, Cossacks, shock troops, artillery deployed in a fan, and soldiers returning from the front. These forces, untested in the fire of an insurrection, would have seemed far more terrible than they had actually turned out to be. That is the lesson that must be engraved into the consciousness of every revolutionary!

Lenin's persistent, tireless, relentless pressure on the Central Committee throughout September and October was the result of his constant fear that we would lose the moment. Nonsense, replied the right wing, our influence will grow and grow. Who was right? And what does it mean to lose the moment? Here we get to the point of sharpest conflict between the Bolshevik evaluation of the ways and means of revolution, active, strategic, and practical throughout, and the Social-Democratic, Menshevik evaluation, shot through with fatalism. What does it mean to lose the moment? Obviously, the most favourable conditions for the insurrection exist when the correlation of forces has shifted most strongly in our favour. Of course, this refers to the correlation of forces in the realm of consciousness, i.e. to the political superstructure, and not to the base, which can be taken to be more or less constant through all the epochs of the revolution. On one and the same economic base, in one and the same class division of society, changes in the correlation of forces depend on the mood of the proletarian masses, the shattering of their illusions, their accumulation of political experience, the shaking of the faith of the intermediate classes and groups in state power, and, finally, the weakening of the latter's faith in itself. In times of revolution, these processes all happen very quickly. The whole art of tactics is about seizing the moment when the constellation of conditions is most beneficial for us. The Kornilov insurrection [*vosstanie*] ultimately prepared these conditions. The masses, having lost faith in the parties of the Soviet majority, saw the danger of counter-revolution with their own eyes. They thought it was now the Bolsheviks' turn to find a way out of the situation. Neither the spontaneous [*stikhiinyi*] disintegration of state power, nor the spontaneous wave of impatient and demanding trust of the masses towards the Bolsheviks could last long; the crisis had to be resolved one way, or another. Now or never! said Lenin.

Those on the right replied:

It would be a profound historical injustice to put the question of the transfer of power into the hands of the proletarian party in terms of 'Now or never'. No! The party of the proletariat will grow, its programme will become clearer and clearer to the broad masses ... And there is only one way it can ruin its successes, and that is by initiating a demonstration [*vystuplenie*] in the current circumstances ... We are raising a note of caution against such a pernicious policy.

'K tekushchemu momentu'³³

This fatalistic optimism deserves careful study. There is nothing national or even individualistic in it. Only last year we observed the same tendency in Germany. Essentially, this temporising fatalism conceals indecisiveness and even an inability to act, although it cloaks itself in a comforting prediction: we are becoming, they say, more and more influential, and our power will continue to grow as time goes on. What a gross delusion! The power of the revolutionary party grows only up to a certain point, after which it can go in the opposite direction. Because of the passivity of the party, the hopes of the masses give way to disillusion, and the enemy meanwhile recovers from its panic and exploits the disillusion of the masses. We witnessed such a decisive turnaround [*perelom*] in October 1923 in Germany. And we in Russia were not so far from a similar turn of events in the autumn of 1917. A delay of a few more weeks might have been enough for that. Lenin was right: now or never!

Finally, the opponents mounted their strongest argument against an insurrection:

The crucial question is whether the mood among the workers and soldiers is really such that they themselves see their salvation only in fighting in the streets, and that they are bursting to take to the streets. No. No such mood exists ... The existence of a fighting mood, a desire to take to the streets, among the broad masses of the city poor could guarantee that such an action would bring on board more powerful and important organisations (the railway and postal-telegraph unions etc) where our party's influence is weak. But as this kind of mood does not even exist in the industrial plants [*zavody*] and barracks, it would be self-deluding to rely on this happening.

'K tekushchemu momentu'³⁴

33 'K tekushchemu momentu', in *Protokoly* 1958, p. 92.

34 'K tekushchemu momentu', in *Protokoly* 1958, p. 91.

These lines, written on 11 October, acquire exceptional and most timely significance when we remember that the German comrades who led the party explained last year's retreat without striking a blow precisely in terms of the unwillingness of the masses to fight. But it is a fact that a victorious insurrection will generally be most assured when the masses manage to get enough experience so that they do not rush headlong into battle, but wait and demand a resolute leadership that is able to fight. By October 1917, the masses of workers, or at least their leading strata, had come to the firm conviction, on the basis of the experience of the April demonstration, the July Days and the Kornilov Affair, that it was no longer a matter of individual, spontaneous protests, or of further reconnaissance, but of a decisive insurrection to seize power. The mood of the masses became correspondingly more focussed, more critical, more profound. The transition from cheerful, illusion-filled spontaneity to a more critical consciousness also brings with it an inevitable revolutionary hesitation. This progressive crisis in the mood of the masses can be overcome only by the proper policy of the party, i.e. above all it has to be truly ready and able to lead the insurrection of the proletariat. On the other hand, a party that conducts revolutionary agitation over a long period, dragging the masses out from under the influence of the conciliationists, and then, after it has been borne up by the trust of those masses, begins to waver, tries to be clever, to dissemble, and to play a waiting game, that kind of party will paralyse the activity of the masses, causing their disillusionment and ruin, destroying the revolution. After this debacle, however, it will turn around and blame the insufficient level of activity of the masses. This was the course taken by the letter 'On the Current Situation'. Fortunately, our party, under Lenin's leadership, resolutely eliminated [*likvidiroval*] these kinds of attitudes at the top. This fact alone allowed it to accomplish a victorious overthrow.



Now that we have described the essential nature of the political problems connected with the preparation of the October Revolution, and have tried to explain the basic disagreements over these problems, it remains for us to summarise the most important moments of the struggle within the party in the last, decisive weeks.

The resolution for armed insurrection was taken by the Central Committee on 10 October. The above letter, 'On the Current Situation', was sent to the most important organisations of the party on 11 October. A letter from Kamenev appeared in *Novaia zhizn'* on 18 October, one week before the overthrow. 'Not only I and comrade Zinoviev, but a number of other practically-

minded comrades feel that to take the initiative for an armed insurrection at the present moment, given the existing correlation of social forces, and independently of and a few days before the Congress of Soviets, would be an impermissible step that would disastrous for the proletariat and the revolution' (*Novaia zhizn'*, no. 156, 18 October 1917).³⁵ On 25 October, power was seized [*ylast' zakhvachena*] in Petersburg,³⁶ and the Soviet government was set up. On 4 November, a number of responsible party workers [*rabotniki*] quit the Central Committee of the party and the Council of People's Commissars [*sovnarkom*], and issued an ultimatum demanding the creation of a coalition government of all the Soviet parties. 'Without this', they wrote, 'there is only one course: the preservation of the purely Bolshevik government by means of political terror'.³⁷ And in another document at the same time: 'We cannot take responsibility for this destructive policy of the CC which is being conducted against the will of an enormous part of the proletariat and soldiers who long for an end to the bloodshed between individual parts of democracy as quickly as possible. We gave up our titles of members of the CC in order to have the right to express our opinion openly to the masses of workers and soldiers and to call on them to support our cry: "Long Live the Government of Soviet Parties! Immediate Agreement on this Basis!"' ('*Oktiabr'skii perevorot*', *Arkhiv revoliutsii*, 1917, pp. 407–10).³⁸ So those who had opposed the armed insurrection and the seizure of power as an adventure, were demanding, after the insurrection was successfully achieved, that power be returned to the very parties the proletariat had struggled against in order to win power. And why should the victorious Bolshevik party return power – and this was precisely about returning power! – to the Mensheviks and SRS? To this the oppositionists [*oppozitsionery*] responded: 'We think that such a government must be created in order to prevent further bloodshed, imminent famine, and the crushing of the revolution by the Kaledinites [*Kaledintsy*], and to ensure the convocation of the Constituent Assembly within the stipulated period of time and the actual realisation of the programme of peace adopted by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies' ('*Oktiabr'skii perevorot*', *Arkhiv revoliutsii*, 1917, pp. 407–10).³⁹ In other words, this was about clearing a path to bourgeois parliamentarianism through the gates of the Soviets. The revolution had refused

35 'Iu. Kamenev o 'vystuplenii'', *Novaia zhizn'*, no. 156 (150), 18 (31) October 1917, p. 3.

36 Trotsky used Petersburg here, rather than Petrograd.

37 *Oktiabr'skii perevorot* 1918, p. 408.

38 *Oktiabr'skii perevorot* 1918, p. 409.

39 Ibid.

to pass through the Pre-parliament and had beat its own path through October, and so the task, as formulated by the opposition [*oppozitsiia*], was to save the revolution from dictatorship, with the help of the Mensheviks and SRs, by guiding it towards a bourgeois regime. This was nothing more and nothing less than the end of October. Any agreement under such conditions was of course out of the question.

On the next day, 5 November, another letter was published along these lines:

In the name of party discipline, I cannot be silent when Marxists, in the face of common sense and in defiance of the course of events, refuse to come to terms with the objective conditions which are insistently telling us, under the threat of chaos, to come to an agreement with all socialist parties ... In the name of party discipline, I cannot give in to the cult of personality [*kul't lichnosti*] and make political agreement with all socialist parties that support our basic demands dependent on the presence of this or that individual in the Ministry, and because of this prolong the bloodshed by even one minute.

Rabochaia gazeta, no. 204, 5 November 1917

In conclusion, the author of the letter (Lozovskii) declared that it was necessary to fight for a party congress to decide whether 'the RSDRP of Bolsheviks [*R.S.-D.R.P bol'shevikov*]' will remain the Marxist party of the working class, or whether it will finally take a path that has nothing in common with revolutionary Marxism' (*Rabochaia gazeta*, no. 204, 5 November 1917).⁴⁰

The situation really looked hopeless. The party's efforts to stay in power so that it might carry out its own programme were publicly condemned not only by the bourgeoisie and landlords, but also by the so-called 'revolutionary democracy' which still controlled the leading bodies of many organisations (Vikzhel', the Army Committees, state civil servants, etc), and even by the most influential members of our own party, the members of the Central Committee and the Council of People's Commissars. The situation could have looked hopeless, we repeat, if one did not look beneath the surface of the events. What then was left to do? To give in to the demands of the opposition meant the end of October. But then all would have been for naught. Only one option was left: to press on and count on the revolutionary will of the masses. On 7 November, *Pravda* printed the decisive declaration of the Central Committee of our party, written by

40 A. Lozovskii, 'Zaiavlenie v bol'shevistskuiu fraktsii Ts. I. K.', *Rabochaia gazeta*, no. 204, 5 November 1917, p. 4.

Lenin and full of genuine revolutionary passion, expressed in clear, simple and incontestable language intended for the rank-and-file party member [*partiits-massovik*]. This declaration put an end to any doubts about the future policy of the party and its Central Committee:

Shame on all those of little faith, all vacillators, all doubters, all those who allow themselves to be frightened by the bourgeoisie or who give in to the screams of its direct or indirect accomplices. *Not a shadow* of hesitation exists in the *masses* of workers and soldiers in Petrograd, Moscow and elsewhere. Our party, as united and firm as one man, stands guard for Soviet power, stands guard for the interests of all toilers [*trudiashchikhsia*], especially for the workers and the poorest peasants.⁴¹

Pravda, no. 182 (113), 20 (7) November 1917

The most acute party crisis had been overcome. The internal struggle, however, was not yet over. The battle lines remained the same. But its political significance faded. We find extremely interesting evidence of this in the report read by [Moisei] Uritskii to a meeting of the Petrograd Committee of our party on 12 December concerning the convening of the Constituent Assembly:

The disagreements in the ranks of our party are not new. This very same tendency was observed earlier on the question of the insurrection. Now, some comrades are looking at the Constituent Assembly as if it should be the crowning glory of the revolution. They take a conventional position, saying that we should not do anything tactless, etc. They object to members of the Constituent Assembly, namely the Bolsheviks, deciding the timing of its convocation, the correlation of its forces, and so on. They adopt a purely formal view, completely ignoring the fact that the exercise of this control is but a reflection of events occurring outside of the Constituent Assembly, and it is with this in mind that we are able to outline our attitude to the Constituent Assembly ... It is our view now that we are fighting for the interests of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry, while a few comrades consider that we are making a bourgeois revolution which must be crowned by the Constituent Assembly.⁴²

41 'Ot Tsentral'nogo Komiteta Rossiiskoi Sotsialdemokraticheskoi Partii (bol'shevikov). Ko vsem chlenam partii i ko vsem trudiashchimsia klassam Rossii', *Pravda*, no. 182, 20 (7) November 1917, p. 2.

42 *Pervyi* 1927, p. 374.

The dissolution of the Constituent Assembly can be seen as marking the end not only of a great chapter in the history of Russia, but of no less a chapter in the history of our party. By overcoming the internal friction, the party of the proletariat not only won power but was also able to hold on to it.

The October Insurrection and Soviet 'Legality'

In September, during the Democratic Conference, Lenin demanded immediate insurrection. 'In order to treat insurrection in a Marxist way', he wrote,

i.e., as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a single moment, organise a *headquarters* [*shtab*] of the insurgent detachments, distribute our forces, move the reliable regiments to the most important points, surround the Alexandrinsky Theatre, occupy the Peter and Paul Fortress, arrest the General Staff and the government, and move against the officer cadets and the Savage Division those detachments which would rather die than allow the enemy to approach the strategic points of the city. We must mobilise the armed workers and call them to fight the last desperate fight, occupy the telegraph and the telephone exchange at once, move *our* insurrection headquarters to the central telephone exchange and connect it by telephone with all the factories, all the regiments, all the points of armed fighting, etc. Of course, this is all by way of example, only to *illustrate* the fact that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to Marxism, to remain loyal to the revolution *unless insurrection is treated as an art*.

vol. XIV, part 2, p. 140⁴³

This formulation presupposed that the insurrection would be prepared and carried out by and in the name of the party, and that the victory would be sanctioned by the Congress of Soviets. The Central Committee did not adopt this proposal. The insurrection was directed into Soviet channels and was linked in our agitation with the Second Congress of Soviets. Detailed explanation of this disagreement will make it clear that this was, of course, not a question of principle, but rather a technical issue, although one of great practical importance.

We have already pointed out that Lenin was intensely anxious about any postponement of the insurrection. In the context of the vacillations among

43 Lenin 1964j, p. 27.

the party's upper ranks, the move to formally link the overthrow with the impending Second Congress of Soviets seemed to him an intolerable delay, a concession to indecisiveness and to the indecisive, a waste of time, and a blatant crime. Lenin returned to this thought again and again from the beginning of September.

'There is a tendency, or an opinion,' he wrote on 29 September, 'in our Central Committee and among the leaders of our Party which favours waiting for the Congress of Soviets, and is opposed to taking power immediately, is opposed to an immediate insurrection. That tendency, or opinion, must be overcome'.⁴⁴ At the start of October, Lenin wrote: 'Delay is criminal. To wait for the Congress of Soviets would be a childish game of formalities, a disgraceful game of formalities, and a betrayal of the revolution'.⁴⁵ In his theses for the Petersburg Conference on 8 October, Lenin wrote: 'It is necessary to fight against constitutional illusions and hopes placed in the Congress of Soviets, to discard the preconceived idea that we absolutely must wait for it', and so on.⁴⁶ Finally, on 24 October, Lenin wrote: 'It is now absolutely clear that to delay the uprising would be fatal'. And later: 'History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they could be victorious today (and they certainly will be victorious today), while they risk losing much tomorrow, in fact, they risk losing everything'.⁴⁷

All these letters, every sentence of which was hammered out on the anvil of revolution, are exceptionally interesting both for what they tell us about Lenin and about the evaluation of the moment. They are pervaded with fundamental outrage, protest, and indignation against a fatalistic, temporising, Social-Democratic, Menshevik attitude to revolution, as if it were an endless film. If time is generally an important factor in politics, then its importance grows a hundred-fold in war and in revolution. Not everything that can be done today can be done tomorrow. To rise up, to overthrow the enemy, to seize power may be possible today, but turn out to be impossible tomorrow. After all, to seize power is to change the course of history; surely such an event cannot hinge upon an interval of 24 hours? Yes, it can. When things have reached the point of armed insurrection, events are measured not by the long yardstick of politics, but by the short yardstick of war. To lose several weeks, several days, sometimes even a single day, may amount under certain conditions to surrendering the revolution, to capitulation. If Lenin had not sounded the alarm, without

44 Lenin 1964k, p. 82. Emphases in Lenin's original are not preserved by Trotsky in his text.

45 Lenin 1964l, p. 141.

46 Lenin 1964m, p. 144.

47 Lenin 1964n, p. 235.

his pressure, his criticism, his intense and passionate revolutionary mistrust, the party would surely have failed to fall into line at the crucial moment, for the opposition in the upper ranks was very strong, and the general staff plays a major role in war, including civil wars.

At the same time, however, it is quite clear that preparing and carrying out the insurrection under cover of [*pod prikrytiem*] preparing for the Second Congress of Soviets and under the slogan of defending it gave us inestimable advantages. From the moment we, the Petrograd Soviet, protested against Kerensky's order transferring two thirds of the garrison to the front, we were in fact already in a state of armed insurrection. Lenin, who was not in Petrograd, did not appreciate the full significance of this fact. As far as I remember, none of his letters from that period contain a single word about it. And yet the outcome of the insurrection of 25 October was already three-quarters settled, if not more, at the moment when we protested against the transfer of the Petrograd garrison, created the Military Revolutionary Committee (16 October), appointed our commissars to all military units and institutions, thereby completely isolating not only the General Staff of the Petrograd Military District but also the government. In essence, we had here an armed insurrection – an armed but bloodless insurrection of the Petrograd regiments against the Provisional Government – under the leadership of the Military Revolutionary Committee and under the slogan of preparing for the defence of the Second Congress of Soviets, which would decide the fate of state power. Lenin's advice to start the insurrection in Moscow, where, he assumed, it would be a bloodless victory, came from the fact that from the underground he was unable to assess the radical shift not only in the mood but also in the organisational ties among the entire military rank-and-file and hierarchy after the 'silent' insurrection of the capital's garrison in the middle of October. From the moment that the battalions, on the order of the Military Revolutionary Committee, refused to leave the city and remained, we had a victorious insurrection in the capital, covered with a slight veneer of remnants of the bourgeois-democratic state. The insurrection of 25 October was merely a supplement to this. This is why it proceeded painlessly. On the other hand, the struggle in Moscow was more drawn out and bloodier, despite the fact that the power of the Council of People's Commissars had already been established in Petrograd. It is quite obvious that if the insurrection had started in Moscow, before the overthrow in Petrograd, it would inevitably have been more protracted and the outcome highly uncertain. Failure in Moscow would have had a grave effect on Petrograd. Of course, victory was by no means impossible by that path. But the path the events actually took turned out to be much more economical, more favourable, and more successful.

We were able more or less to time the seizure of power with the Second Congress of Soviets only because the 'silent', almost 'legal' armed insurrection – at least in Petrograd – was three-quarters, if not nine-tenths, a reality. We call this insurrection 'legal' in the sense that it grew out of the 'normal' conditions of dual power. While the conciliationists were in the ascendance in the Petrograd Soviet, the Soviet often verified or corrected the decisions of the government. This became part of the constitution, so to speak, of the regime, which history came to know as the Kerensky era [*Kerenshchina*]. When we Bolsheviks came to power in the Petrograd Soviet, we continued and deepened the methods of dual power. We took it upon ourselves to review the garrison's transfer order. In this way, we disguised [*prikryli*] the actual insurrection of the Petrograd garrison with the traditions and methods of legal dual power. Furthermore, by formally deferring the question of power in our agitation until the Second Congress of Soviets, we developed and deepened the already existing traditions of dual power, and prepared the framework of Soviet legality for the Bolshevik insurrection across all of Russia.

We did not soothe the masses with Soviet constitutional illusions, for under the banner of the struggle for the Second Congress we won over to our side the bayonets of the revolutionary army and consolidated it organisationally behind us. Furthermore, we managed, to a greater extent than we believed possible, to lure our enemies, the conciliationists, into the trap of Soviet legality. Resorting to political cunning [*politicheski khitrit'*], especially in a revolution, is always dangerous: you may well fail to deceive the enemy and instead mislead the masses who follow you. If our 'cunning' proved one hundred percent successful, it was not because it was an artful scheme thought up by crafty strategists who wanted to avoid a civil war, but because it derived naturally from the disintegration of the conciliationist regime, from its blatant contradictions. The Provisional Government wanted to get rid of the garrison. The soldiers did not want to go to the front. We gave this natural reluctance political form, a revolutionary purpose, 'legal' cover. We were therefore able to get unanimity in the garrison and tie it closely to the Petrograd workers. On the other hand, our opponents, their position hopeless and their thoughts confused, were inclined to accept the Soviet cover at face value. They longed to be deceived, and we gave them every opportunity to satisfy that desire.

A battle for Soviet legality was being waged between us and the conciliationists. In the minds of the masses, the Soviets were the source of all power. From those Soviets came Kerensky, Tsereteli, and [Matvei] Skobelev. But we too were closely bound up with the Soviets through our basic slogan: All Power to the Soviets. The bourgeoisie derived its right of succession to power [*pravopreemstvennost'*] from the State Duma. The conciliationists derived theirs from the

Soviets, but with the aim of reducing the Soviets to nothing. We derived ours from the Soviets, but with the aim of transferring power to the Soviets. The conciliationists could not yet break with Soviet heritage and rushed to build a bridge between the latter and parliamentarianism. With this aim in mind, they convened the Democratic Conference and created the Pre-parliament. The participation of the Soviets in the Pre-parliament lent a sanction of sorts to this path. The conciliationists sought to hook the revolution using Soviet legality as bait, and, once hooked, to drag it onto the path of bourgeois parliamentarianism.

But we were also interested in making use of Soviet legality. When the Democratic Conference ended, we extracted from the conciliationists their agreement to convene the Second Congress of Soviets. That Congress put them in an extremely difficult position: on the one hand, they could not oppose convening it without breaking with Soviet legality, on the other hand, they could not fail to recognise that the Congress, given its composition, promised nothing good for them. We appealed ever more insistently to the Second Congress, as the real master [*khoziain*] of the country, and tailored all our preparatory work to the support and defence of the Congress of Soviets against the inevitable attacks from the counter-revolution. If the conciliationists had lured us into Soviet legality by using the Pre-parliament, arising from the Soviets, then we, in our turn, lured them into that same Soviet legality by using the Second Congress of Soviets. It is one thing to organise an armed insurrection under the naked slogan of the seizure of power by the party, but quite another to prepare and then carry out an insurrection under the slogan of defending the rights of the Congress of Soviets. By the way, in deferring the question of the seizure of power to the Second Congress of Soviets, we did not harbour any naïve hopes at all that the Congress itself would be able to resolve the question of power. That kind of fetishism of the Soviet form was completely alien to us. All the necessary work for the seizure of power, not only the political but also the organisational and technical military work, went on full steam ahead. But the legal cover for this work was the constant reference to the upcoming Congress that would have to settle the question of power. On the attack all across the board, we kept up the appearance of being on the defensive. The Provisional Government, on the other hand, if it could just have made up its mind to defend itself properly, would have had to attack the Congress of Soviets, prohibit its convocation, thereby giving its opponents a motive, damaging to the Government itself, for an armed insurrection. Furthermore, we not only placed the Provisional Government in a politically difficult position, but also lulled their already lazy, dull minds to sleep. These people really believed that we were concerned about Soviet parliamentarianism, about the

new Congress at which a new resolution on power would be adopted – in the manner of the resolutions of the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets –, after which the government, referring the question to the Pre-parliament and the upcoming Constituent Assembly, would ignore it and put us in a ridiculous position. The wisest of the petty-bourgeois [*meshchanskie*] wise men were thinking precisely along these lines, as Kerensky's testimony reveals irrefutably. In his memoirs, he relates how, in his office at midnight on 25 October, heated arguments raged with Dan and others over the armed insurrection, which was in full swing by then. 'Above all, Dan declared to me', says Kerensky,

that they were far better informed than I was, and that I was exaggerating events under the influence of my 'reactionary staff'. He then said that the resolution of the majority of the Soviet of the Republic, such a blow 'to the *amour-propre* of the government', would be extremely useful and essential in bringing about a 'change of heart in the masses'; that its effect 'was already making itself felt', and that the influence of Bolshevik propaganda would now 'decline rapidly'. On the other hand, according to Dan, the Bolsheviks themselves, in negotiations with the leaders of the Soviet majority, had declared themselves ready 'the very next day' to undertake all measures to quell the revolt, 'which had flared up against their wishes and without their sanction'. In conclusion, Dan, having mentioned that the Bolsheviks would disband their military staff 'the very next day' (always the next day!), told me that all the measures I had taken to suppress the insurrection were only 'aggravating the masses', and that, in general, by my 'meddling', I was merely 'preventing the representatives of the majority in the Soviets from successfully negotiating a peaceful end to the insurrection with the Bolsheviks' ... To complete the picture, I should add that just at the moment when Dan was making this remarkable statement, armed detachments of the 'Red Guard' were occupying government buildings, one by one. And almost immediately after Dan and his colleagues had left the Winter Palace, [Anton] Kartashev, the Minister of Religion [*ministr isповedanii*], on his way home from a meeting of the Provisional Government, was arrested on Millionaia street and taken directly to Smolnyi, where Dan had returned to resume peaceful negotiations with the Bolsheviks. I have to acknowledge that the Bolsheviks were acting at that time with great energy and no less skill. At a time when the insurrection was in full swing and 'red troops' were active all across the city, some Bolshevik leaders, appointed for the purpose, tried, not without success, to make the representatives of 'revolutionary demo-

cracy' look but not see, to listen but not hear. All night, these past masters [*iskusniki*] engaged in interminable quarrels about various formulas, which were supposed to form the basis for reconciliation and for an end to the insurrection. The Bolsheviks gained an enormous amount of time with this method of 'negotiation'. But the fighting forces of the SRS and Mensheviks were not mobilised in time. But this, of course, had to be demonstrated!.

A. KERENSKII, *Izdaleka*, pp. 197–8⁴⁸

Exactly! It had to be demonstrated! As this picture shows, the conciliationists turned out to have swallowed Soviet legality hook, line and sinker. Kerensky's assumption that some Bolsheviks were specially appointed to mislead the Mensheviks and SRS about the impending end to the insurrection was, in fact, erroneous. What actually happened was that those Bolsheviks who participated most actively in the negotiations really desired an end to the insurrection and believed in the formula of a socialist government, formed by the conciliation of all parties. Objectively, however, these parliamentarians undoubtedly performed a service for the insurrection, by feeding the illusions of the enemy with their own illusions. But they were able to render this service to the revolution only because the party, despite their advice and warnings, pushed on with the business of insurrection with unstinting energy, and took it to its conclusion.

The success of such a broad, all-encompassing manoeuvre [*manevr*] required a confluence of quite exceptional circumstances, great and small. Above all, an army was needed that was unwilling to fight any more. As we have already said, the entire course of the revolution, especially in its initial phases, including from February to October, would have looked completely different if at the moment of revolution there had been no broken and dissatisfied peasant army of many millions in our country. These conditions alone made possible the successful experiment with the Petrograd garrison, which predetermined victory in October. There is no way that this unique combination of a 'dry' [*sukhoi*] and almost imperceptible [*nezametnyi*] insurrection with a defence of Soviet legality against the followers of Kornilov can be reduced to any kind of a law. On the contrary, we can state with certainty that this experience will never be repeated anywhere in this form. But we must study it carefully. It will broaden the horizon of every revolutionary, revealing to him the vari-

48 The complete reference is Kerenskii 1922, pp. 197–8. A version of this can be found in Kerensky 1965, pp. 435–7.

ety of methods and means that can be deployed in the movement when the goals are clearly articulated, when conditions are correctly understood, and when there is the determination to see the struggle through to its conclusion.

In Moscow, the insurrection was far more protracted and entailed many more sacrifices. This was largely because the Moscow garrison had not experienced the same revolutionary preparation as the Petrograd garrison in connection with the question of the transfer of battalions to the front. We have already said, and we say again, that the armed insurrection in Petrograd was carried out in two stages: the first, in the first half of October, when the Petrograd regiments, obeying the decree of the Soviet and fully in accord with their own sentiments, refused with impunity to carry out the order of the High Command [*glavnokomandovanie*]; the second, on 25 October, when only a small additional insurrection was needed to cut the umbilical cord of the February state system [*fevral'skaia gosudarstvennost'*]. In Moscow, though, the insurrection took place in one stage. This was probably the main reason it was so protracted. But there was also another reason: the leaders were not decisive enough. In Moscow we saw a shift from military action to negotiations, only to be followed by a shift back to military action. If vacillations among the leaders, transmitted to their followers, are generally harmful in politics, they are a mortal danger in the context of an armed insurrection. The ruling class has already lost faith in its own strength (without this, no hope of victory can exist in general), but it still holds of the apparatus of state. The task of the revolutionary class is to take over this state apparatus. To do so, it must have confidence in its own strength. Once the party has led the toilers to the path of insurrection, it must draw all necessary conclusions from this. 'War is war': vacillating and procrastinating are less permissible than at any other time. War is measured by a short yardstick. Marking time, even for a few hours, restores a modicum of confidence to the ruling class and takes it away from the insurgents. But this directly determines the correlation of forces which in turn determines the outcome of the insurrection. From this viewpoint, it is necessary to study the course of military operations in Moscow step by step as a function of the political leadership.

It would be very important to point out some other instances where civil war has taken place under special conditions, one complicating element, for example, being nationality. This kind of study, based on careful consideration of the facts, can only enrich our understanding of the mechanisms of civil war and thereby help to elaborate certain methods, rules, and schemas that are sufficiently general in nature as to serve as a kind of 'manual' [*ustav*] of civil

war.⁴⁹ But in anticipation of the partial conclusions from such a study, it may be said that the course of the civil war in the provinces was determined to a great extent by its course in Petrograd, even given its delay in Moscow. The February revolution put a crack in the old machinery of state. The Provisional Government inherited it, and was unable to repair it or strengthen it. Between February and October, therefore, the machinery of state functioned only as a relic of bureaucratic inertia. The provincial bureaucracy was accustomed to do whatever Petrograd did: it did this in February, and did it again in October. Our great advantage was that we were preparing to topple a regime which had not yet managed to establish itself. The 'February' regime's extreme instability and lack of self-confidence made it easier for us to cultivate the self-confidence of the revolutionary masses and the party itself.

A similar situation existed in Germany and Austria after 9 November 1918. But there, Social Democracy filled in the cracks in the machinery of state and helped to establish the bourgeois republican regime, which, even though it can in no way be considered a model of stability, has already survived for six years. As for other capitalist countries, they will not have this advantage of proximity between the bourgeois and proletarian revolution. Their February is already far in the past. Of course, England still possesses a good many relics of feudalism, but there can be no talk of any independent, bourgeois revolution happening in England. When the English proletariat comes to power, the first sweep of its broom will rid the country of the monarchy, the lords, and the rest. In the West, the proletarian revolution will have to deal with a fully established bourgeois state. This still does not mean, though, that it will have to deal with a stable state apparatus, for the very possibility of a proletarian insurrection presupposes that the capitalist state is in an advanced state of decay. If our October Revolution developed in a struggle with a state machine which did not manage to consolidate itself after February, then in other countries the insurrection will be confronted by a state machine that finds itself in a state of advanced decay.

It may generally be assumed – we already pointed this out at the IV Congress of the Comintern – that the pre-October opposition of the bourgeoisie will be much stronger in the old capitalist countries than in our own; the victory of the proletariat will be much more difficult to achieve. On the other hand, once the proletariat wins power, it will inherit a far stabler and firmer situation than we had on the day after October. In our country, the civil war really got

49 See L. Trotsky, 'Voprosy grazhdanskoi voiny', *Pravda*, no. 202, 6 September 1924. [original footnote]. ['Problems of Civil War', in Trotsky 1975, pp. 175–98].

underway only after the proletariat had taken power in the main urban and industrial centres, and took up the first three years of Soviet power. There is every indication that in the countries of Central and Western Europe it will be much more difficult for the proletariat to take power, but that, once it has seized power, the proletariat will have a much freer hand. Of course, these are merely hypothetical considerations of the perspectives. A good deal will depend on the order in which revolutions take place in the different countries of Europe, on the chances of military intervention, and on the economic and military strength of the Soviet Union at the time, and so on. In any event, it is our basic, and we think incontrovertible, assumption that the very process of taking power will encounter in Europe and in America a much more serious, stubborn and considered resistance from the ruling classes than we encountered. This makes it all the more incumbent on us to approach the matter of armed insurrection, and civil war in general, as an art.

Once More on the Soviets and the Party in a Proletarian Revolution

In our country in 1905 and in 1917, the Soviets of Workers' Deputies emerged from the movement itself as its natural form of organisation at a certain stage of the struggle. The young European parties, though, which have accepted the Soviets more or less as a 'doctrine', a 'principle', always run the risk of fetishising the Soviets as some kind of self-sufficient factor in the revolution. Nevertheless, despite the enormous advantages of the Soviets as organisations of the struggle for power, it is quite possible that insurrections will develop through other organisations (factory and plant committees, trade unions), and that only in the course of the insurrection, or even after its successful conclusion, will Soviets emerge as the organs of state power.

Highly instructive in this regard is the struggle launched by Lenin after the July Days against fetishising the organisational form of Soviets. Insofar as the SR-Menshevik Soviets became the organisations which, in July, were openly pushing the soldiers into an offensive and were suppressing the Bolsheviks, the revolutionary movement of the worker masses was obliged to look for other paths and channels for itself. Lenin pointed to the factory and plant committees as the organisations of the struggle for power (see, for example, the reminiscences of comrade Ordzhonikidze).⁵⁰ The movement would have very probably taken this route but for the attack by Kornilov [*Kornilovskoe*

50 S. Ordzhonikidze, 'Il'ich v iul'skie dni', *Pravda*, no. 71, 28 March 1924, p. 4.

vystuplenie] which forced the conciliationist Soviets to defend themselves and gave the Bolsheviks the opportunity to breathe new revolutionary life into the Soviets again, tying them closely with the masses through the left, i.e. Bolshevik, wing.

As the recent experience in Germany has shown, this question is of enormous international significance. It was precisely in Germany that several times Soviets were created as organs of insurrection – without any insurrection taking place; and as organs of power – without any power. This led to the following situation: in 1923, the movement of broad proletarian and semi-proletarian masses began to crystallise around the factory and plant committees, which were *basically* performing all those functions that fell to the Soviets in our own country in the period before the direct struggle for power. And yet in August and September, several comrades proposed that soviets be set up immediately. After long and heated discussions, this proposal was rejected, and quite rightly. Considering that the factory and plant committees had in fact already become rallying points for the revolutionary masses, the Soviets would just have been a meaningless, parallel organisation in that preparatory period. They would only have siphoned off attention from the mechanics of the insurrection (army, policy, armed hundreds [*sotni*], railways, etc.) in favour of a self-contained organisational form. Moreover, the creation of Soviets, as Soviets, prior to the insurrection and separately from the immediate tasks of the insurrection, would have meant an open declaration: 'I am coming for you!' The government, forced to 'tolerate' the factory and plant committees since they had become the rallying points of the broad masses, would have hit out at the very first Soviet as the official organ of an 'attempt' to seize power. The Communists would have had to come to the defence of the Soviets as purely organisational entities. The decisive struggle would have unfolded not for the sake of seizing or defending material positions, and not at a moment of our choosing when the insurrection would flow from the conditions of the mass movement – no, the struggle would have flared up over a type of organisation, over the Soviet 'banner', at a moment of the enemy's choosing, and forced upon us. Furthermore, it is quite obvious that all the preparatory work for the insurrection could have been carried out successfully on the authority of the factory and plant committees. These had already succeeded in becoming mass organisations, had continued to grow and strengthen, and provided the party with a free hand in setting the date for an insurrection. Of course, the Soviets would have emerged at some stage. It is doubtful whether they, under the aforementioned conditions, would have emerged as the direct organs of insurrection, in the heat of battle, because this would have run the risk of setting up two revolutionary centres at the most critical moment. Don't change horses in midstream,

as the English saying goes. It is possible that after victory the Soviets would have begun to be built everywhere at the decisive places in the country. In any event, a successful insurrection would have inevitably led to the creation of Soviets as organs of power.

It must not be forgotten that in our country the Soviets emerged at the 'democratic' stage of the revolution, became legal, as it were, at that stage, and were later inherited and used by us. This will not be repeated in the proletarian revolutions in the West. There, in most cases, the Soviets will be created at the behest of the Communists, and consequently as the direct organs of proletarian insurrection. Of course, it is not impossible that the disintegration of the bourgeois state machinery will be far advanced before the proletariat is able to seize power – and this will furnish the conditions for the creation of Soviets *as the open organs for preparing the insurrection*. But this is not likely to be the general rule. Most likely, it will be possible to create the Soviets as the direct organs of the insurgent masses only in the very last days. Finally, it is quite probable that the Soviets will emerge only after the breakthrough of the insurrection and even as a result of it, as organs of the new power. We must keep an eye on all of these possibilities, so as not to succumb to organisational fetishism and so as not to transform the Soviets from what they must be – a flexible, living form of struggle – into an organisational 'principle' imposed on the movement from the outside and interfering with its proper development.

There has been talk in our press lately that we do not know the path by which the proletarian revolution will come to England: whether by the Communist Party or the trade unions. Such a formulation of the question, flaunting a fictitiously broad grasp of history, is fundamentally wrong and dangerous, because it blurs the chief lesson of the past few years. If a successful revolution did not come at the conclusion of the war, it was because a party was missing. This conclusion can be applied to Europe as a whole. It can be traced more concretely in the fate of the revolutionary movement in individual countries. With regard to Germany, the case is quite clear: the German revolution might have succeeded both in 1918 and in 1919, had a proper party leadership been in place. In 1917 we saw this in Finland; there, the revolutionary movement developed in exceptionally favourable conditions, under the aegis and the direct, military support of revolutionary Russia. But most of the leaders in the Finnish party turned out to be Social Democrats, and they ruined the revolution. The lesson from Hungary's experience is equally clear. There, the Communists together with the Left Social Democrats did not win power, but were handed it by the frightened bourgeoisie. The Hungarian revolution – triumphant without a battle and without a victory – turned out to be devoid of a

fighting leadership from the very outset. The Communist Party merged with the Social Democratic Party, revealing that it was not a true Communist Party, and, despite the fighting spirit of the Hungarian proletariat, it was thus incapable of holding onto the power it had so easily obtained. Without a party, separately from a party, bypassing a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot triumph. This is the main lesson of the past decade. It is true that the English trade unions might become a powerful lever of the proletarian revolution; they might, for example, even replace the Workers' Soviets, under the right conditions and at the right time. But they will not be able to do this separately from a Communist Party, and certainly not in opposition to it, but only if Communist influence in the trade unions becomes decisive. We have paid too dearly for this conclusion – about the role and meaning of a party in a proletarian revolution – to renounce it so easily or even to downplay its significance.

In bourgeois revolutions, consciousness, premeditation, and planning played a far smaller role than they are destined to play, and already do play, in proletarian revolutions. In the former, the motive force of the revolution was still the masses, although they were far less organised and conscious than today. The leadership was in the hands of various groups of the bourgeoisie which had at its disposal wealth and education, and all of the organisational advantages these things bring (towns, universities, the press, and so on). The bureaucratic monarchy defended itself in piecemeal fashion, groping around blindly and then acting. The bourgeoisie seized an opportune moment, taking advantage of the movement of the lower classes [*nizy*] to throw its social weight onto the scale and seize power. The proletarian revolution is different, because the proletariat acts not only as its main force of attack but also – in the form of its vanguard – as its guiding force. The role played in bourgeois revolutions by the economic power of the bourgeoisie, by its education, by its municipalities and universities, can, in the proletarian revolution, only be played by the party of the proletariat. The role of the party has become ever greater as the enemy has become ever more conscious. Through centuries of dominance, the bourgeoisie has perfected a political schooling far superior to the schooling of the old bureaucratic monarchy. If parliamentarianism was to a certain extent the proletariat's preparatory school for revolution, it was to an even greater extent the bourgeoisie's school for counter-revolutionary strategy. Suffice it to say, through parliamentarianism the bourgeoisie educated Social Democracy so that it is the chief buttress of private property today. The age of social revolution in Europe, as its first steps have shown, will be an age not only of intense and merciless struggle, but of planned and calculated ones as well – far better planned than in our country in 1917.

This is why we need to approach the question of civil war, and of armed insurrection in particular, in a completely different way than has been seen up to now. Following Lenin, we all keep repeating Marx's words about insurrection being an art.⁵¹ But this idea becomes an empty phrase if Marx's formulation is not supplemented by a study of the basic elements of the art of civil war in light of the enormous accumulated experience of recent years. We must be direct: a superficial attitude to the question of armed insurrection is evidence that the power of Social-Democratic tradition has not yet been overcome. A party which pays scant attention to the questions of civil war, in the hope that everything will somehow work out at the crucial moment, is destined for defeat. We must, as a collective, work through the experience of the proletarian battles, starting with 1917.



The aforementioned history of the party groupings in the course of 1917 is also part and parcel of the experience of the Civil War and has, we think, direct significance for the politics of the Communist International as a whole. We have said it before, and we will say it again, that the study of disagreements cannot and should in no way be seen as an attack on those comrades who were pursuing a false [*lozhnyi*] policy. On the other hand, it would be intolerable to erase the greatest chapter from the history of the party, just because not all members of the party kept pace with the revolutionary proletariat. The party can and must know its *entire* past if it is to be able to evaluate it correctly and assign proper significance to each part of it. The tradition of a revolutionary party is built not on evasions, but on critical clarity.

History provided our party with truly inestimable revolutionary advantages. The traditions of the heroic struggle against tsarism; the habits and methods of revolutionary self-sacrifice, bound up with the conditions of the underground; the broad theoretical examination of the revolutionary experience of all mankind; the struggle against Menshevism; the struggle against Populism [*narodnichestvo*]; the struggle against conciliationism; the supreme experience of the 1905 revolution; the theoretical assimilation of this experience during the years of counter-revolution; the approach to the problems of the interna-

51 Cf. the letter from Friedrich Engels in the *New York Daily Tribune* on 18 September 1852, in which he specifically calls insurrection an art in reference to the German Revolution of 1848 (Engels 1967, p. 227).

tional labour movement in light of the revolutionary lessons of 1905 – taken together, these tempered our party in an exceptional way, giving it the most penetrating theoretical insight and unparalleled revolutionary sweep. And yet, even in this party, in its upper reaches, on the eve of decisive action, a group of experienced revolutionaries, Old Bolsheviks, formed from among its leaders, who were sharply opposed to a proletarian overthrow and, in the course of the most critical period of the revolution from February 1917 to approximately February 1918, took an essentially Social-Democratic position on all fundamental questions. Lenin's exceptional influence in the party, already unparalleled at that time, was needed to protect the party and the revolution from the enormous confusion caused by this. This must never be forgotten if we want the Communist parties of other countries to learn anything from us. The business of selecting the leadership personnel takes on exceptional significance for the West European parties. The experience of the abortive German October is appalling proof of this. This selection must take place from the viewpoint of *revolutionary action*. During these years, Germany has provided ample examples of leading party members being put to the test at moments of direct struggle. Without this criterion, all else is worthless. During these years, France was much poorer in revolutionary upheavals, even partial ones. Even in the political life of that country, however, there were flashes of civil war when the Central Committee of the party and the leaders of the trade unions had to react actively to urgent and acute questions (for example, the bloody demonstration of 11 January 1924).⁵² Careful study of these kinds of acute episodes provides irreplaceable material for evaluating party leadership, the conduct of individual organs of the party, and individual leading party officials. To ignore such lessons, not to draw the necessary conclusion about the selection of people – is to invite inevitable defeats, for without insightful, resolute and bold party leadership, the victory of the proletarian revolution is not possible.

A party, even the most revolutionary party, inevitably develops its own organisational conservatism; otherwise it would lack the necessary stability. It is all a matter of degree. In a revolutionary party, the necessary dose of conservatism must be combined with complete freedom from routine, with initiative

52 On 11 January 1924, on the rue de la Grange aux Belles, anarchists challenged the inward-looking platform of the French Communists at a Communist election meeting. The anarchists were fired upon by the *service d'ordre*, killing two and wounding one. Gabriel Ducœur, administrative secretary of the Railwaymen's Federation of the CGTU, was one of the perpetrators of the shootings. This incident, among others, caused the Communists to re-evaluate violent action and its uses in pursuit of the party programme.

in orientation, and with a spirit of practical daring. These qualities are most sharply tested at history's turning points. We have already heard Lenin's say that, when circumstances change abruptly and pose different tasks, even the most revolutionary parties often continue on yesterday's political course and thereby become or threaten to become a drag on revolutionary development. Both the conservatism of the party and its revolutionary initiative find their most concentrated expression in the leading organs of the party. In the meantime, the European Communist parties have yet to face the sharpest 'turning point' – the turn from preparatory work to the seizure of power. This turn is the most demanding, urgent, responsible, and formidable. To miss this moment is the greatest defeat that can befall a party.

The experience of the European struggles, and especially the German struggles of recent years, viewed in light of our own experience, tells us that there are two types of leader [*vozhd*] who are inclined to drag the party backwards at the very moment when it should be taking a giant leap forward. Some are generally inclined to see mainly difficulties, obstacles, and barriers on the road to revolution, and they judge each situation according to a preconceived, although not always conscious, intention to avoid any action. Such individuals turn Marxism into a way of divining the impossibility of revolutionary action. The purest examples of this type are the Russian Mensheviks. But this type as such is not confined to Menshevism, and suddenly turns up, at critical moments, in responsible posts in the most revolutionary party. Examples of the second type of leader are distinguished by their superficial, agitational approach. They do not see any obstacles and difficulties at all until these hit them in the face. Their ability to skirt real obstacles with the aid of fleet turns of phrases, to exhibit blind optimism on all issues ('the ocean is only knee-deep'),⁵³ inevitably becomes the exact opposite when the hour for decisive action strikes. For the first type of leader, who makes mountains out of molehills, the difficulties of seizing power are presented as the accumulation and amplification of all those difficulties that he has become accustomed to seeing in his way. For the second type, the superficial optimists, the difficulties of revolutionary action are always sudden and unexpected. In the preparatory period, the behaviour of these two types is different: the former is a skeptic, who cannot be relied upon in a revolutionary sense; the latter, on the other hand, may seem like a fanatical revolutionary. But, at the decisive moment, they will both join hands – to stand against the insurrection. Meanwhile, all the preparatory work is of value

53 An untranslatable idiom ('*more po koleno*'), conveying blind, reckless optimism, often acquired through excessive drinking.

only if it enables the party, and especially its leading organs, to determine the moment of insurrection, and to lead it. For the task of the Communist Party is to capture power for the purpose of reconstructing society [*pereustroistvo obshchestva*].

Much has been said and written lately about the need to 'bolshevisé' [*bol'shevizatsiia*] the Comintern. This task is beyond dispute and cannot be delayed; it has become especially acute after last year's cruel lessons in Bulgaria and Germany. Bolshevism is not a doctrine (i.e. not just a doctrine) but a system of revolutionary training for the proletarian upheaval. What does the bolshevisation of Communist parties mean? It means educating them in their selection of leadership personnel so that they will not drift along on the current when the time comes for their own October. 'That's Hegel's philosophy in short, That's the deepest wisdom books bestow!'⁵⁴

A Few Words About This Book⁵⁵

The initial phase of the 'democratic' revolution extends from the February overthrow to the April crisis and its resolution on 6 May through the formation of a coalition government, with the participation of the Mensheviks and Populists. The author of this book played no part in this initial phase at all, having arrived in Petrograd only on 5 May, on the very eve of the formation of the coalition government. I addressed the first stage of the revolution and its prospects in articles written in America. I believe that, on all the essential points, these articles conform completely with Lenin's analysis of the revolution in his 'Letters from Afar'.

From the first day of my arrival in Petrograd, I carried out my work in complete agreement with the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks. Of course, I completely and utterly supported Lenin's path to the conquest of power by the proletariat. On the peasantry, I had not a shadow of disagreement with Lenin who by that time had just finished the first stage of his struggle against the right Bolsheviks and their slogan 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry'. Before formally joining the party, I helped draft a number of resolutions and documents issued in the name of the party. The only consideration that delayed my formal entry into the party for three months

54 Heine 1982, p. 392.

55 This refers to the book, 1917, for which 'The Lessons of October' was the introduction (Trotskii 1924d, pp. ix–lxvii).

was my desire to hasten the merger of the best elements of the Interdistrict Organisation [*mezhraiontsy*] and the revolutionary internationalists in general. This policy too I pursued with Lenin's full agreement.

The editor of this book has drawn my attention to one of the articles I wrote at that time arguing for unification, in which I refer to the organisational 'cliquishness' [*kruzhkovshchina*] of the Bolsheviks. Some deep-thinking reader [*d'iachok*] like comrade Sorin will, of course, lose no time in deducing this phrase directly from the disagreements about paragraph one of the Party Statutes. I see no reason to quarrel about this – after all, I have admitted, by my words and my deeds, my real and major organisational mistakes. A less perverse reader will, however, find a far simpler and direct explanation for the above expression used by me in the context of the most concrete conditions of the time. The *mezhraiontsy* members still harboured a very strong mistrust from the past towards the organisational policies of the Petrograd Committee. Arguments from 'cliquishness' – replete with references to all kinds of 'injustices', as is always the case in such circumstances – were widespread among the *mezhraiontsy*. In the article, I was objecting that cliquishness, inherited from the past, does exist, but that if it declined, then the *mezhraiontsy* had to end their separate existence.

My purely polemical 'proposal' that the First Congress of Soviets form a government of twelve Peshekhonovs has been interpreted by someone – by [Nikolai] Sukhanov, apparently – either as some kind of personal expression of my goodwill towards [Aleksei] Peshekhonov or as some kind of special political line distinct from Lenin's. This is, of course, pure nonsense. When our party demanded that the Soviets, led by the Mensheviks and SRs, seize power, it by definition 'demanded' a ministry made up of Peshekhonovs: in the final analysis there are no differences of principle at all among Peshekhonov, Chernov, and Dan, and they were all equally useful for facilitating the transfer of power from the bourgeoisie to the proletariat. Maybe Peshekhonov knew statistics a little better and made a more business-like impression than Tsereteli or Chernov. A dozen Peshekhonovs meant a government made up of a dozen representatives of petty-bourgeois democracy instead of a coalition. When the Petrograd masses, led by our party, raised the slogan, 'Down with the ten capitalist ministers!', they were demanding that these ministers' posts be filled with Mensheviks and Populists. 'Throw the Kadets out! Messrs. Bourgeois Democrats, take power into your own hands! Put twelve (or as many as there are) Peshekhonovs in the government, and we promise to remove you from your posts as "peacefully" as possible when the hour strikes! And the hour will strike soon!' There was no special political line here – it was the same line that Lenin had formulated more than once.

I consider it necessary to emphasise strongly the warning made by comrade [Navum] Lentsner, the editor of this book: many of the speeches in this volume were reprinted not from stenographic notes, even poor notes, but from journalistic accounts in the conciliationist press, half-ignorant and half-malicious. A cursory inspection of several documents of this sort caused me to discard my original plan of making corrections and additions to them. Let them remain as they are: they too are documents of the age in their own way, if 'from the other side'.

The present volume could not have been published without the attentive and competent supervision of comrade Lentsner, who is responsible for the notes, and of his assistants, comrades Geller, Kryzhanovskii, Rovenskaia, and I. Rumer.

I express my comradely gratitude to all of them.

I want to make special mention of the enormous work done in preparing this volume, and my other books as well, by my closest collaborator, M.S. Glazman. I write these lines with feelings of the most profound sadness over the deeply tragic fate of this splendid comrade, party worker, and man.⁵⁶

A Necessary Correction

On opening a recently published book, I stumbled by chance across the following phrase, which I had apparently said at a meeting of conciliationist executive committees of peasants', workers' and soldiers' Soviets on 20 July 1917, when we were discussing the question of Chernov's retreat in the face of accusations of relations with the Germans: 'The honourable name of comrade Lenin', I said, 'is as dear to us as is (!) the name of Chernov (!!!)'. In fact, I of course said: 'The honourable name of comrade Lenin is as dear to us as is the name of Chernov *to you*'. I feel it is necessary to mention this distortion because there are many such inaccuracies, benign and malign, in reports that are being made, and the reader should take them into account.

56 These final two paragraphs were not in the original 1924 edition of Trotsky's piece. They were included, however, in other editions (for example, *Ob 'Urokhakh Oktiabria'* 1924, p. 262).

‘Who Carried Out the October Revolution?’¹ (On the “History” of October in L. Trotsky’s Book 1917)²

I. Stepanov

People have been writing and interpreting the history of the October Revolution for a long time.

All the Black Hundred-Kadet bastards with their Right Menshevik and Right SR lackeys and hirelings were interpreting this revolution before it had been completed.

Just as the 1905 Revolution, for the Markovs and Purishkeviches, was staged for Japanese interests and with Japanese money, so October 1917, for the new Black Hundreds, was the fruit of underground work by the German General Staff which did not skimp on resources.

These ‘historians’, these corrupt souls, these toadies, whose actions and lives were all connected with the American dollar, the French franc, the English pound sterling, the Czechoslovak crown and the Polish mark, are in no position to cast themselves as the wellsprings of human actions.

It has long been recognised that such ‘historical’ writings do not provide real history at all, but rather the nimble self-representations of the authors.

Almost all of Lenin’s letters, which have been published now, relate to the war period and to the situation being described at that time, as the author of the letters and the creator of our organisation places a new indelible mark on the brazen temples of those who screamed about ‘German money’ and ‘the sealed train’.

‘As regards myself personally’, Lenin writes, for example, in September 1916, ‘I will say that I need to earn. Otherwise we shall simply die of hunger, really and truly!! The cost of living is devilishly high, and there is nothing to live on. The cash must be dragged *by* force out of the publisher of *Letopis*, to whom my two pamphlets have been sent ... The same as regards translations. If this

1 I submitted this article to the editors of the journal *Krasnaia molodezh'* on 30 October, even before the first article about L. Trotsky’s *The Lessons of October* had appeared in the central organ of the party. [Stepanov’s footnote].

2 I. Stepanov, ‘Kto sovershil Oktiabr’skuiu revoliutsiiu? (Po povodu ‘istorii’ Oktiabria v knige L. Trotskogo 1917)’, in *Za Leninizm* 1925, pp. 265–72.

is not organised I really will not be able to hold out, this is absolutely serious, absolutely, absolutely' (*Leninskii sbornik*, II, p. 279).³

'I will not be able to hold out', – i.e. 'we shall simply die of hunger', appear as fleeting remarks scattered through various letters, – fleeting remarks, because Lenin never expanded on his own, as it were, 'personal' matters.

But in addition to the Black Hundred history of the revolution, there are a whole range of leftist shades in the evaluation of our revolution, from the liberals to the 'almost-Bolsheviks'.

Even 1905 has not yet received a sufficiently broad Bolshevik exposition, and it is still unclear how this will happen, even though we are approaching the twentieth anniversary of 1905.

But in those years when we, trying to preserve order in the forced retreat, threw our energies into the fight to maintain the fighting organisation; in those years when the doors of the publishing houses were closed to us and we fought for resolute revolutionariness in our tactics and our fighting slogans, and for whatever the censor forbade us from doing – in those very years the Mensheviks, both individually and collectively, came out with their obituaries to the revolution, which they regarded as firmly buried by the Romanov-Dubasov shootings, Stolypin's military field courts, and, primarily, Bolshevik tactics.

They threw out a series of pamphlets, booklets and multivolume publications. These writings all argued that the revolution had been buried first and foremost because the masses, having turned away from the leadership of the Mensheviks, were not transformed into an obedient army, into cannon fodder for the liberal bourgeoisie, but wanted to pursue their own class goals. The revolution, they were sure, was defeated because the proletariat, following the Bolsheviks, took up tasks which went beyond the framework of bourgeois society, which, while pursuing reasonable tactics, should have taken nothing more than a liberal façade from the revolution.

The October Revolution of 1917 produced what had already existed in 1905 but had turned out to be unrealisable at that time given the level of economic and political development. And as soon as the October Revolution was victorious, it was also threatened by its own historical perils.

After the defeat of 1905, numerous historical studies argued most persuasively that revolutionary Bolshevik 'anarcho-maximalism' had been guilty of crushing all liberal hopes.

After the victory in October 1917, historians, who had not taken part in all the campaigns of the Bolshevik Party and who had not experienced its

3 Lenin 1966a, p. 236.

entire history with it and as a part of it but who had taken part energetically in its final battles, had to show conclusively in their studies that victory was secured in spite of the Bolshevik organisation, in defiance of it, that this organisation had to push for revolution and accomplish it by force from above.

The history of the October overthrow ceases to be the history of the masses, which had embarked on a new stage of their own progressive movement, prepared by the entire preceding period, a period that had been a difficult, painful, bloody, but ultimately magnificent, school for them. And at the same time the October overthrow ceases to be the history of the leadership activity of Lenin and the Leninist party, which, having already lived through a decade and a half of the colossal experience of attacks, retreats and tense struggle with enemies, fellow travellers, and the muddle-headed, had evolved as a single whole, organically connected with its leader.

The history of the October overthrow becomes a purely individual history, which obscures and ignores the Leninist party: it ignores it to the point that the individualistic historian neither knows nor understands its internal mechanism, its links with the revolutionary movement of the masses.

The historian who has not lived through the great historical experience in the party and as part of the party, imagines, on the model of relations in the command staff, purely individualistically that the usual relationship existed between the party and its leader.

He does not know – and, mainly, he is not able to feel – how organically each of our steps began to take shape and how we drew up every directive. If our leader had not lived with the party and in the party to such a degree, if he had simply prescribed his directives to it, if he had not looked, not listened, not deliberated, if the party had not counterposed to him other evaluations and other points of view, he would not have been the ingenious strategist and tactician, he would not have been the great revolutionary leader of the twentieth century, and the party would not have been the vanguard of the world proletariat, but rather a small sect, a circle of conspirators, a little group of adventurers, led by a great adventurer and master of rhetoric, as somebody would have termed it before the revolution of 1917.

If the historian became an active ally of the party only after 1917 and saw, only from that moment, how it had organised its ranks in order to organise the struggle of the masses, he could easily fall victim to self-deception. In his eyes, his own participation takes on primary, decisive significance. And if he discovers that not everything was clear to the party all at once, that it still found that it needed to discuss, and had discussed, the question of the direction and

forms of the mass actions, then for him this is the clearest evidence that the revolution was completed without the party and, arguably, in spite of the party.

For the historian who is not pursuing the aims of the defence lawyer and who is not writing the indictment of the prosecutor to whom somebody has given the task of undermining the party, for the historian who experienced the entire great era with the party and in the party, it is not difficult to answer the question: how did the October Revolution occur?

It was carried out by the worker and peasant masses. And these masses achieved victory because their fight was led by Lenin and the Leninist party.

It is necessary to read and re-read the second *Leninskii sbornik*, which appeared on the seventh anniversary of the October Revolution; it is necessary to read and re-read the letters printed there from Vladimir Il'ich to comrades Shlyapnikov and [Alexandra] Kollontai. At that time everything was in the right perspective, at that time there was no place for individualistic illusions and lofty self-deceptions:

'Clearly', Vladimir Il'ich wrote in August 1915, 'the advanced stratum of the Pravdaist workers is the foundation of our party, it remained intact, despite the terrible havoc wrought in its ranks. It would be extremely important to combine in 2–3 centres the leading groups (arch-conspiratorial), which are linked with us, and to resurrect the bureau of the Central Committee (already in Petersburg, it seems) and the Central Committee itself in Russia' (p. 240).⁴

And he later repeats again and again how important it is to create bases of 'revolutionary pravdaists'.

He was correct. In spite of the terrible failures, these revolutionaries kept their work alive and continued it in many areas, overcoming a horrendously difficult situation. We need only remember the Petersburg Committee, which was completely ignored by the individualistic viewpoint of individualistic historians. And furthermore, however weak and intermittent Vladimir Il'ich's links might have been with this committee, they provided him with the material to come up with his theses, which should be called nothing other than the programme of the revolution of 1917.

He already wrote in these theses in October 1915:

Soviets of Workers' Deputies and similar institutions must be regarded as organs of insurrection, of revolutionary rule. It is only in connection with

4 These and subsequent quotations are taken from *Leninskii sbornik*, no. 2, published by the Institut Lenina pri TsK RKP(b). [Stepanov's footnote] [V.I. Lenin, 'A. Shliapnikovu' [23 VIII 1915] in *Leninskii sbornik* 1924, p. 240].

the development of a mass political strike and with an insurrection, and in the measure of the latter's preparedness, development and success that such institutions can be of lasting value. Only a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry can form the social content of the impending revolution in Russia ... The task confronting the proletariat of Russia is the consummation of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia in order to kindle the socialist revolution in Europe. The latter task now stands very close to the former, yet it remains a special and second task, for it is a question of the different classes which are collaborating with the proletariat of Russia. In the former task, it is the petty-bourgeois peasantry of Russia who are collaborating; in the latter, it is the proletariat of other countries ... By revolutionary chauvinists we mean those who want a victory over tsarism so as to achieve victory over Germany, plunder other countries, consolidate Great-Russian rule over the other peoples of Russia, etc. Revolutionary chauvinism is based on the class position of the petty bourgeoisie [...] At present it is vacillating between chauvinism (which prevents it from being consistently revolutionary, even in the meaning of a democratic revolution), and proletarian internationalism. At the moment the Trudoviks, the Socialist Revolutionaries, *Nasha Zarya*, Chkheidze's Duma group, the Organising Committee, Mr. [Georgii] Plekhanov and the like are political spokesmen for this petty bourgeoisie in Russia. If the revolutionary chauvinists won in Russia, we would be opposed to a defence of their 'fatherland' in the present war. Our slogan is: against the chauvinists, even if they are revolutionary and republican, against them, and for an alliance of the international proletariat for the socialist revolution. To the question of whether it is possible for the proletariat to assume the leadership in the bourgeois Russian revolution, our answer is: yes, it is possible, if the petty bourgeoisie swings to the left at the decisive moment; it is being pushed to the left, not only by our propaganda, but by a number of objective factors, economic, financial (the burden of war), military, political, and others. To the question of what the party of the proletariat would do if the revolution placed power in its hands in the present war, our answer is as follows: we would propose peace to all the belligerents on the condition that freedom is given to the colonies and all peoples that are dependent, oppressed and deprived of rights. Under the present governments, neither Germany, nor Britain and France would accept this condition. In that case, we would have to prepare for and wage a revolutionary war, i.e. not only resolutely carry out the whole of our minimum programme, but work systematically to bring about an uprising among all peoples now oppressed by the Great

Russians, all colonies and dependent countries in Asia (India, China, Persia, etc.), and also, and first and foremost, we would raise up the socialist proletariat of Europe for an insurrection against their governments and despite the social-chauvinists. There is no doubt that a victory of the proletariat in Russia would create extraordinarily favourable conditions for the development of the revolution in both Asia and Europe. Even 1905 proved that ...

Leninskii sbornik, II, pp. 251–2⁵

A careful read of these theses is enough to get a straight answer to the question which the individualistic historians grudgingly ask: where did the basic views form and how were the strategy and tactics, which led the working class to victory, worked out – were they worked out in the Leninist party itself, or somewhere else, where for example the idea of ‘permanent revolution’ was being advanced in 1905?

Several of the 1915 theses would be enough to bury once and for all this question of the authorship of Bolshevik views. The theses, printed in *Sotsial-demokrat* on 13 October 1915, are as if the headlines of the most important stages of the revolution of 1917 had been written down after it had happened. They account in advance for all of the complexity of contemporary society, all of the multifarious interests generated by the dissolution of feudalism and the advanced development of capitalism, the whole colourful interweaving of world relations, which the ‘*permanentshchiki*’⁶ would shoehorn into the following simple, in their view all-encompassing, formula: ‘the advanced development of capitalism’. And precisely because the theses accounted in advance for the complex picture of the contemporary world, they gave rise to subtle tactics and an ingenious strategy which, for any place and time, express long-overdue revolutionary tasks, and find real resources to achieve them.

Well, but what could the *permanentshchiki* suggest?

The second issue of *Leninskii sbornik* reminds us yet again that when the aforementioned theses were being put together, the *permanentshchiki* were providing Chkheidze and Co. with the permanent possibility of ‘play[ing] at leftism’, and, while mouthing their leftist phrases, they slid irrevocably towards a ‘bloc with the rightists against the aims of the leftists’ (pp. 240, 282, etc.).⁷

⁵ Lenin 19640, pp. 402–4.

⁶ Dismissive epithet for adherents of the theory of permanent revolution.

⁷ V.I. Lenin, ‘A. Shliapnikovu’ [23 VIII 1915], in *Leninskii sbornik* 1924, p. 240; and V.I. Lenin, ‘A. Kollontai’ [17.II.17], in *Leninskii sbornik* 1924, p. 282, etc.

Were the theses of October 1915 new to the 'revolutionary Pravdaists'? No, they repeated in a concise, clear, and articulate way what *Pravda* had fought for in 1912–14, and what the party had already fought for in the 1905 revolution.

And just as the theses simply reminded us about what the party had already adopted in earlier years, almost a decade ago and even earlier, they played their own organisational role for those 'revolutionary Pravdaists', who remained in Russia despite the savage, government reprisals.

But Vladimir Il'ich did not arrive in a desert in April 1917: he returned to an organisation with which he spoke a common language – they had everything in common. The desperate struggle for the party that marked the years of reaction stripped it of all the alien elements. The revolutionary struggle against the war was accompanied by a new, additional purge [*chistka*]: all the Kautskyists, and all those elements who were seeking little bridges to Kautskyanism, were swept out of the party.

The cadres of the Leninist party were homogeneous to an extent that was perhaps rare up to that time. But this does not, of course, mean that the party passively watched the moves of the marshal's staff: in our party, there never have been and never will be any staff-bearers or marshals.

I do not remember if the press reported that, when we were at the Stockholm Congress of 1906, Vladimir Il'ich came out decisively at our meetings in favour of participation in the elections to the First Duma. The struggle against him was quite heated. It is possible that he privately held to his former opinion, but at the plenum of the congress he came out in favour of boycotting the duma. It would be possible to cite many more examples of this kind of 'struggle' inside the party, during which our tactics were worked out, and which, by taking strictly party forms, strengthened our party internally. In our party, it is a given, and always has been a given, that Vladimir Il'ich does not pontificate, does not order, does not command, but persuades.

Of course, when the Leninist party was approached by those who had previously directed their energies in a struggle against it and, in the best case, pursued tactics which were a complete rejection of Leninist tactics, this increased our party's strength. No one will forget this. And as the circumstances took shape, no one wanted to expunge this glorious page from the history of their political development, if they did not want to tear it out themselves.

But, for all that, it would be the grossest distortion of reality to forget and smooth over the fact that Vladimir Il'ich found a sufficiently broad and strong organisation on his return: not two or three centres of Pravdaists, which he was dreaming about in 1915, but tens and hundreds of such centres – in all the industrial and provincial cities and in many regions.

These revolutionary Pravdaists were the living embodiment of an unbroken chain of development, the living embodiment of historical continuity from December 1905 to October 1917, and which, preserved in the party organisation, provided the possibility of transforming the December defeat into the October triumph.

The working class and the peasantry accomplished the 1917 Revolution. They secured victory because they were guided by Lenin and the Leninist party, which had assimilated and reworked the entire great experience of the class struggle of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

'How the History of October Must not be Written (On L. Trotsky's Book 1917)'¹

N. Bukharin

Comrade Trotsky's recently published book (1917), devoted to the 'Lessons of October', is fast becoming 'fashionable'. This is not surprising, given that it set out to become a sensation inside the party.

After last year's events revealed that our party opposition had been completely wrong, and after the facts proved over and over that the party leadership had been right, comrade Trotsky is reviving the discussion again, if this time 'by other means'. The preface to this book (and the 'crux' of this book lies in this preface and in the notes to it) is written in a quasi-Aesopian language, so that the quite inexperienced reader will not notice the hints and allusions permeating it. It is first necessary to decipher this peculiar coded language (which proliferates in comrade Trotsky's writings despite his demand for 'critical clarity'). For comrade Trotsky's work, which claims to be a faithful companion [*sputnik*] for the 'study of October', is in danger of becoming a guide 'for every present and future discussion'. After all, it is essentially assuming the mantle of the fight against the line of both the party and the Comintern. It has none of the hallmarks of a theoretical analysis, but looks more like a political platform as a basis for undermining the specific resolutions adopted by the various congresses.

Comrade Trotsky's book is not written just for the Russian reader – this is quite clear to anyone. To a great extent, it has been written in order to 'inform' foreign comrades. But now, when a whole series of Communist parties are facing the issue of their 'Bolshevisation', when interest in the history of our party is undoubtedly growing, comrade Trotsky's book can render a real disservice. Not only does it not teach Bolshevism, it will become a real factor in 'debolshevising' [*razbol'shevichivanie*] foreign Communist parties – so one-sided, biased, and sometimes even monstrous is its distortion of events and its attempt to analyse them and draw conclusions for the present.

1 'Kak ne nuzhno pisat' istoriiu Oktiabria (Po povodu knigi L. Trotskogo 1917)', *Pravda*, no. 251, 2 November 1924, pp. 2–3. This appeared as an unsigned editorial. Later collections, in which it appeared, identified Nikolai Bukharin as the author (see *Za Leninizm* 1925, pp. 9–25). It also appeared as a separate pamphlet (see *Kak ne nuzhno* 1924).

This is why it is necessary to evaluate critically this new work by comrade Trotsky. It cannot go unanswered. It is regrettable that comrade Trotsky, who has drawn incorrect conclusions from the 'lessons of October', has no desire to draw any conclusions from the more recent 'era' of last year's quarrels [*spory*]. The best test of different points of view, as comrade Trotsky himself recognises, is experience, life itself. And life has shown that the guiding political line recognised by the party not only has not brought the country to 'the verge of ruin', as last year's opposition predicted with its prophesy of all the plagues of Egypt on our 'country', it is in fact rapidly moving the country forward, in spite of issues like the harvest and so on which have nothing to do with any 'platform'.

On the other hand, an enormous number of new tasks has arisen in the new circumstances; difficulties which are connected with the process of growth. Above all else then, the whole party desires no-nonsense [*delovoi*] work, tested by experience, and on the basis of a 'platform' which has incorporated this experience. For this reason it would be even less desirable to revisit the old arguments, even in a different form.

But comrade Trotsky saw fit to do this anyway. He of course bears full responsibility for this. We must respond to this book regardless, for the party must respond to any propaganda that is directed at decisions that have been taken by the party so cordially and so unanimously. Let us take a look now at the ideological baggage [*ideinyi bagazh*] that comrade Trotsky has brought to the party, at those 'lessons' which he has drawn from October and which he is kind enough now to teach to our young and old comrades.

I The Question of Historical Verification

Comrade Trotsky's arguments hinge on his evaluation of the significance of various periods in the history of our party. In essence, he sees things this way: the entire period of development of the party up to October was of only secondary importance; only the moment of the seizure of power was decisive, only this period stands out from all the others, only in that moment are we able to evaluate the classes, the party, their leading cadres, and individual figures.

To engage now [...] in an evaluation of various viewpoints about revolution in general and the Russian revolution in particular, and to bypass the experience of 1917 while doing it, would be a fruitless, academic exercise, and in no sense a Marxist political analysis. This would be like discussing the advantages of different swimming styles, while stubbornly refusing to look at the river in which the swimmers will be practising these styles.

There is no better test of views on revolution than their application at the time of revolution itself, just as a style of swimming is best tested when the swimmer jumps into the water.

xvi²

'What does the bolshevisation of Communist parties mean? It means educating them in their selection of leadership personnel so that they will not drift along on the current when the time comes for their own October. "That's Hegel's philosophy in short, That's the deepest wisdom books bestow!"' (65).³

These sentences contain only half the truth, and one can therefore draw (as comrade Trotsky does) completely false conclusions from them.

Comrade Trotsky tells the Communist parties: study October in order to be victorious, never overlook October.

Of course, we must never do that. Just as we must forget neither 1905 nor the particularly instructive years of the reaction. But who is suggesting such an absurd thing, when, where? Who has dared to say such nonsense openly, when, where?

No one has suggested this. But precisely in order to understand the conditions of the October victory, it is necessary to go beyond the immediate preparation of the insurrection. There is no way to separate one from the other. In no way is it possible to evaluate the groups, individuals, and tendencies without the context of that period of preparation which comrade Trotsky equates with arguments over 'swimming styles'. Of course, in the 'critical period' when the decisive struggle is at hand, all questions become urgent, and all nuances, tendencies, and groupings tend to exhibit their most typical, intrinsic, essential qualities. On the other hand, their positive role during the upswing [*pod'em*] of revolution can by no means always be explained by the correctness of their 'point of view'.

'It is not difficult to be a revolutionary when revolution has already broken out and is in spate', this is how comrade Lenin formulated this aspect of the matter (*Sochineniia*, vol. XVII, p. 183).⁴ Later, he says: 'A revolutionary is not one who becomes revolutionary with the onset of the revolution, but one who defends the principles and slogans of the revolution when reaction ... is most violent' (Lenin, *Soch.*, XII, 2, 151).⁵

2 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 90. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'several years after October'.

3 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 136.

4 Lenin 1966b, p. 97.

5 Lenin 1963b pp. 231-2.

This is not what comrade Trotsky is saying.

Let's dot the i's. What determined the position of the Bolshevik Party in October? It was determined by the entire previous history of the party, its struggle with all forms of opportunism, from extreme Mensheviks to Trotskyists (for example, the 'August Bloc'). And can it be said that comrade Trotsky's correct position (because it coincided with the Bolshevik position) during the October days derived from his position in the preparatory period? Of course not. On the contrary. If a miracle of history had occurred at that time, and if the Bolshevik workers had heeded comrade Trotsky's preachings [*propovedi*] (unity with the liquidators, the struggle against Lenin's 'cliquishness' and 'sectarianism', the Menshevik political platform, and during the war the struggle against the Zimmerwald Left, etc.), then there would have been no October triumph. Comrade Trotsky, however, entirely ignores this period, although he ought to be sharing this 'lesson' with the party.

Let's take one more example. Many Left SRs fought courageously side-by-side with us on the October barricades. At the decisive moment of October, they made their contribution to the victory.

Did that mean though that they had been 'tested' once and for all by October? Alas, this was not the case at all because the experience after October largely confirmed pre-October judgements about these petty-bourgeois revolutionaries.

And so, October alone, isolated, is in no way sufficient for the 'test'. It is, rather, another moment that tips the balance, a moment pointed out so decisively by comrade Lenin.

When comrade Trotsky declared that the 'bolshevisation' of the Communist parties consists of training them in the selection of their 'leading personnel' so that 'they will not drift along on the current when the time comes for their own October', he is correct insofar as it includes the assimilation of experience from the 'preparatory period'. For even the direct experience of the Russian October can be neither understood nor utilised if the lessons of this preparatory period are not properly internalised.

Comrade Trotsky, who takes the view that the Bolshevik Party essentially begins its existence 'in reality' only from the October days, cannot see the continuity of the party line right up to the 'current moment'.

And for precisely the same reason, he cannot see that after the seizure of power, even after the end of the Civil War, history is by no means over. In the same way, the history of our party is not over either, for this history is also a 'testing of the party line', because it involves not only discussions about this or that viewpoint but also the experience of practical politics.

There could be no 'drifting' in October. But there could be no 'drifting' during

the Brest-Litovsk peace either (when, as comrade Trotsky realised, the 'head', i.e. the life or death of Soviet power, was at stake). There could be no 'drifting' during the discussion of 1921, for, without the Leninist political line, we would have risked almost everything. There could have been no 'drifting' last year, for with financial reforms, with the economic policy, and so on, carried out by the party, we would also have been in a desperate situation. At all of these 'critical' moments though, comrade Trotsky 'drifted', just as he had 'drifted' in the pre-February period of his political existence when he had not yet broken with the open opponents of Bolshevism.

'The tradition of a revolutionary party', writes comrade Trotsky (62), 'is built not on evasions, but on critical clarity'.⁶ Very good. But the demand for 'critical clarity' must apply not only to the events which took place in October but also to the preceding and succeeding periods of development. Only then is a 'real test' possible, for the party of the proletariat is continually in action and it has more than one 'critical' period.

II The Lessons of the Revolution of 1917 and the Struggle Within the Party

Should we be silent about October and its prologue, the February Revolution? Certainly not. This would be either unscrupulous or stupid. Yet with his hints and allusions and his brazen appeals, comrade Trotsky vainly desires to create the impression that the history of October 'has not been successful' because of some kind of maliciousness (a false, 'semi-conscious' evaluation). Statements like the following, for example, are quite out of order: 'It would be even more impermissible, though, to keep silent, for trifling personal reasons, about the most important, internationally significant problems of the October overthrow' (XII).⁷

Of course.

Firstly, comrade Trotsky is hiding the fact that no less has been written about October than about any other period; in his writings, Lenin provided a brilliant evaluation of this period, from which the party can draw the essential lessons of October for a long time to come.

Secondly, comrade Trotsky fails to mention that the 'individuals' in question have repeatedly acknowledged their mistakes, and these mistakes are well-known to the whole party.

⁶ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 133.

⁷ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

In his *History of the RKP*⁸ and in earlier publications, comrade Zinov'ev has discussed them openly, and has done the same before the party and the Comintern; comrade Lenin also spoke about them, but nowhere did he ever link these errors with the later activity after October of those comrades who had taken the wrong path during October.⁹

Now comrade Trotsky, exploiting these errors, wants to revise the entire party line and 'correct' the whole history of the party. This is the crux of comrade Trotsky's argument.

The entire analysis of the events from April to October had started from the assumption that the disagreements 'had torn the party to pieces' and had become more and more acute, until they exploded into a conflict that almost caused a collapse. And the revolution was saved only thanks to the efforts of comrade Lenin, who had the courage to oppose the CC and who was supported by comrade Trotsky who had 'anticipated' Lenin's basic ideas.

There is barely anything in this analysis which corresponded with reality.

Above all, comrade Trotsky ignores the party. It does not exist, its mood cannot be felt, it has disappeared. Trotsky is there, and Lenin is visible in the distance, and there is some kind of dim-witted, nameless CC. The Petrograd organisation, the actual, collective organiser of the workers' insurrection, is nowhere to be seen at all. Comrade Trotsky's entire history scratches exclusively around the 'upper reaches' of the party structure. As far as the entire backbone of the party is concerned, we would look for it in vain in this mysterious picture, 'Where is the Party?', as drawn by Trotsky's masterful hand. Should Marxists be writing history like this? This is a caricature of Marxism. To write the history of October and to leave out the party is to stand with both feet on an individualistic viewpoint, on a viewpoint of 'heroes and crowds'. Such a viewpoint must not be used to educate party members.

8 Zinov'ev 1923a; Zinov'ev 1973.

9 By the way, several facts must be noted in this regard. In spite of the disagreements, Kamenev was, at Lenin's suggestion, elected to the CC of the party at the April Conference, and, at the instruction of the CC, chaired the Second Congress of Soviets at the moment of the insurrection. Already in November 1917, Zinov'ev, whose disagreements with the CC lasted in general only a few days, delivered a report to the CEC, on behalf of the CC of the party, advocating the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. At the Seventh Congress (start of March 1918), Zinov'ev spoke up, on behalf of the CC, in defence of the Leninist line against Trotsky and the 'Leftists'. Consequently, the entire party regarded the October errors of the aforementioned comrades as nothing more than a passing disagreement; on the contrary, the party entrusted them with the most responsible roles, in spite of the fact that it did not approve of these comrades' errors for a single moment [original footnote].

But even in terms of the analysis of the leading figures alone, comrade Trotsky's chronicle does not deserve approval, for it distorts reality. Let's see how comrade Trotsky distorts the course of events:

'The decisions of the April Conference provided the party with the correct principles, but they did not remove the disagreements at the top of the party. On the contrary, as events developed, they could not fail to take on even more concrete shape, becoming most acute at the most crucial moment of the revolution, the days of October' (xxxI).¹⁰

After the July days:

'The right-wing elements of the party became more mobilised, their criticism more resolute' (xxxII).¹¹

Finally, before October:

'An extraordinary congress turned out to be unnecessary. The pressure from Lenin pushed the forces to the left both in the Central Committee and in the fraction of the Pre-parliament' (xxxII).¹²

All of this is extremely ... 'inaccurate'. For the party had already completely consolidated itself ideologically at the Sixth Party Congress. The Central Committee, elected at the Sixth Congress, stood unconditionally on a platform of insurrection. Lenin exercised colossal influence on the CC, for Lenin himself was a leading member of the CC, as everyone knows. But to portray the matter as if a majority of the CC was almost against insurrection, is not to know the party, not to know its CC at that time, it is to sin against the truth. Wasn't the insurrection decided by an overwhelming majority of the CC on 10 October? Why is there a need for a special role for comrade Trotsky in it? The tremendous energy, the truly ardent revolutionary passion, the brilliant analysis of events and the great, hypnotic force of comrade Lenin's letters shaped the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the Central Committee itself. But comrade Trotsky wants to separate Lenin from the CC at all costs, to place them in opposition to each other, to sever the unbreakable bond, which, in fact, had never been broken for a minute. History must not be distorted.

If it were not so, if what comrade Trotsky says were correct, then it would be absolutely impossible to understand (1) why the party did not split during the conflict; (2) why it was able to triumph; (3) why the conflict (the withdrawal from the CC of some of its leading members) could be resolved literally in a few days with the return of these comrades to their posts.

¹⁰ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 104.

¹¹ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 105.

¹² Trotsky, Document 1, p. 110.

And this 'miracle' (a miracle in light of comrade Trotsky's assumptions), as we know, was accomplished, and without any real difficulty. Of course, it can be insinuated that, after victory, many are eager to join the victors, for the victors 'are not judged'.

It must not be forgotten though that victory in Petersburg and in Moscow was just the beginning of the struggle, the beginning of tremendous difficulties, and every member of the party understood this perfectly. These considerations will not in any way help to explain what has to be explained.

All this, though, becomes perfectly understandable if we do not look at the events from an egocentric position like comrade Trotsky's. Then we get roughly the following picture: from April to October the traces of vacillation inside the party gradually disappear; by October they become minimal; the party as a whole joins battle with closed ranks; at the top there are still some comrades who have disagreements with the general line of the party. But precisely because the party (that is no small thing, comrade Trotsky!) was united, precisely because the overwhelming majority of the CC went along with Lenin, these comrades too were carried along by the flow of the party and class, and immediately returned to their posts. They had been 'tested' far more profoundly than merely in the October days ...

III War, Revolution, and the Position of Comrade Trotsky

Comrade Trotsky's 'chronicle' however, and his annotations to it, incorrectly portray not only the relations inside the party but also the process of 'Bolshevisation' of comrade Trotsky himself (we are interested here of course only in his political stance).

From the annotations to comrade Trotsky's piece, we learn for example that 'the articles of L.D. Trotsky, written in America' almost completely 'anticipated' (!) the political tactics of revolutionary Social Democracy.¹³ The basic conclusions of these articles conform almost to the last detail (!) with the political perspectives developed by comrade Lenin in his famous 'Letters from Afar' (370).¹⁴

We learn that 'in the course of the war, the disagreements between the viewpoint of *Nashe Slovo* and Lenin became less and less' (377).¹⁵

13 Trotsky 1924e, p. 370.

14 Lenin 1964c, pp. 295–342.

15 Trotsky 1924e, p. 377.

On the other hand, we learn a whole range of details about the mistakes of *Pravda*, of a number of Bolsheviks, etc.

Yet from this book we will learn precious little about the substance of these disagreements which 'were becoming less and less'; and we will be blatantly misled, if we believe that comrade Trotsky 'anticipated' the Leninist line, as comrade Lentsner, the horribly obsequious editor of the book and author of the annotations, puts it (Lenin did not know that he, according to comrade Trotsky, was a 'plagiarist').

Moreover, the question of his position during the war offers the key to a number of other questions, which takes us into the laboratory where the slogans were formulated and which soon played such an extraordinary, one might even say world-historical, role.

Let's try to recall some things in this regard:

1. 'Peace' or 'civil war'. This is the first disagreement on a real matter of principle, and it shows precisely who 'anticipated' the events and how, and the 'tactics of revolutionary Social Democracy'. The slogan of civil war, advanced by Lenin and the Bolsheviks in the CC, was a specific slogan of Bolshevism at the very start of the war, a slogan which drew a sharp distinction between real revolutionaries and all the variants not only of chauvinists but also of internationalists of a petty-bourgeois [*meshchanskii*], pacifist, 'humanitarian' hue, who had sought a rapprochement with centrist elements. Only by bluntly raising the question of civil war was it possible to identify the cadre of those revolutionaries who later formed the nucleus of the Communist parties.

Comrade Trotsky resolutely opposed this slogan, considering it too narrow, unsuitable for mass propaganda, etc. Was this 'anticipation' of the Leninist position?

2. Defeatism [*porazhenchestvo*] and the struggle against it. The second distinguishing feature of the Bolshevik position was that the revolutionary Social Democrats (we would now say 'Communists') must, in an imperialist war, desire above all else the defeat of their own government. Comrade Trotsky characterised this position as back-to-front nationalism or as nationalism with a minus sign. Now however the deep meaning of this Leninist position, whose roots form the basic source of Bolshevik thinking, is perfectly clear. It truly is its basic source. One need only read, for example, the recently published polemic between Lenin and Plekhanov over the draft programme of the RSDRP (*Leninskii sbornik*, no. 2), in order to understand this.¹⁶ In this polemic with Plekhanov, V.I. sharply criticises the Plekhanov draft for being a manual rather

16 Lenin 1964p, pp. 17–78.

than a declaration of war. The draft speaks about capitalism in general, but we need war against Russian capitalism – that is in essence v.i.'s side of this polemic. Why did Lenin insist on this? Precisely because he was a fighter and not a declaimer [*deklamator*]. The call for the defeat of one's own government was a declaration of war on every kind of pacifism even if hidden beneath a soft mattress of noble phrases, a war on every kind of defencist position even if hidden behind the cleverest masks. This was the sharpest break, a real break with all connections with 'one's own' bourgeois state. Precisely this position in fact, in real life, determined the internationalist position of Bolshevism. This was the second difference of principle between Trotsky and the Bolsheviks.

3. Unity with the Menshevik faction of Chkheidze. Even during the war, comrade Trotsky continued to advocate unity with such elements as the Chkheidze faction, lacking the courage to go for the clear organisational break which was the prerequisite for a correct policy. Not without reason did Lenin fear that some comrades would be taken in by Trotskyism. It is also interesting that even in May 1917, comrade Trotsky did not understand his earlier mistakes. On p. 380 of the book in question, we read:

'On 7 May, 1917, the City-wide Conference of United SDs (Bolsheviks and Internationalists) opened. The conference greeted comrade Trotsky, who was there as a guest. Responding to the greeting, comrade Trotsky declared that for him, *who had always advocated the need for unity in the SD forces* [our emphasis, N.B.], unity was not an end in itself, that this formula must have revolutionary content', etc. (p. 380).¹⁷

It is perfectly clear from this that comrade Trotsky not only failed to condemn his struggle for unity with the liquidators, etc., but makes this tremendous mistake, this fatal error, almost the basis for unification with the Bolsheviks, although fortunately this time he agrees to put some 'revolutionary content' into the 'formula'.

Unfortunately the same underestimation of the depth of his errors on the question of organisation (it was completely evident in comrade Trotsky in last year's discussion) shines through even now. Comrade Trotsky defends himself in a very odd way against accusations from 'some deep-thinking reader like comrade Sorin', against accusations about his struggle against Bolshevik 'cliquishness' [*kruzhkovshchina*]:

17 This refers to the so-called 'mezhraintsy', who existed side-by-side with the Bolsheviks and who at this time stood for unity with the 'left' Mensheviks. After the July days, they, together with Trotsky, joined the Bolshevik Party [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1924e, p. 380].

'In the article, I was objecting that cliquishness, inherited from the past, does exist, but that if it declined, then the *mezhraiontsy* had to end their separate existence (66).'¹⁸

And so, already advocating unification with the Bolsheviks, comrade Trotsky condemned Bolshevik cliquishness as a nasty heritage from the past. But 'should we reject this heritage'? Not a bit. For this so-called cliquishness was in fact the method by which our party created itself, i.e. the organising principle of Bolshevism. And if comrade Trotsky, on p. 65 of his 'Introduction', writes that he has recognised 'his own major organisational mistakes', but on p. 66 justifies the charge of 'cliquishness' brought against pre-revolutionary Bolshevism, this means that he still has not put it all together yet and drawn all the lessons from the history of our party. But he will not be able to do this if he considers the birthday of the party to be the day of its union with the *mezhraionka* or even the glorious days of October when comrade Trotsky himself endured a painful birth as a Bolshevik.

4. The struggle with the Zimmerwald Left. Finally, we must mention the 'worldwide' implications of comrade Trotsky's position. Struggling against chauvinists, social patriots, etc., comrade Trotsky scoffed at the Zimmerwald Left. He regarded them too as a 'clique' and as a Bolshevik whim, poorly suited for 'conditions abroad'. Already in America, where, comrade Lentsner assures us, comrade Trotsky anticipated the position of comrade Lenin, he conducted an active struggle against any show of solidarity with the Zimmerwald Left. Trotsky was not able to approve of this 'split' [*raskol*] from the 'Zimmerwald centrists'. Furthermore, the comrades who were editing *1917* did not care at all to illuminate for the international proletariat this moment of our party history which was, for the International, just as important as the question of civil war, of defeatism, etc. For this was nothing more and nothing less than a choice between the Second and Third International.

5. The concept of 'permanent revolution'. Comrade Trotsky, it turns out, not only 'anticipated' Lenin's position, he also turned out to be right on one of the most crucial issues of both our theory and strategy of revolution – namely the question of 'permanent revolution'. Comrade Trotsky writes on this as follows:

'Even before 1905, Lenin captured the uniqueness of the Russian revolution in the formula of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. This formulation, as later events showed, can only be taken to mean a stage

18 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 137.

on the path to the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat that is supported by the peasantry' (XVII).¹⁹

What can this fantasy mean? In 1905 there was a struggle between the Bolsheviks, who had put forward the slogan 'The Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry', the Trotsky-Parvus group, who had put forward the slogan 'Down with the Tsar, and Long Live the Worker Government!', and thirdly the Poles, led by Rosa Luxemburg, who had put forward the formula: 'The Proletariat Supported by the Peasantry'.

Who turned out to be correct? Comrade Trotsky avoids giving a direct and full answer. Indirectly though, he 'confirms' his own correctness: Lenin's formula could 'only' (!) be a stage on the way to Trotsky's formula.

But it is wrong to say that comrade Trotsky turned out to be right. He turned out to be quite wrong, and the 'further development' proved how wrong he was. For comrade Trotsky's position hinges specifically on the fact that he wanted to skip a 'stage' which could not be skipped (he forgot one 'trifling matter': the peasantry).

'It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism or a Communist in general. You must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might in order to hold the whole chain and *to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link*' (Soch., xv, 223).²⁰

But it was precisely this that comrade Trotsky's slogans were unable to provide. He 'disregarded' that 'special link' which had to be grasped with all one's might. He underestimated the role of the peasantry, and therefore in practice isolated himself from the workers as well:

'The slogans are superb, alluring, intoxicating, but there are no grounds for them; such is the nature of the revolutionary phrase' (Lenin, xv, 100).²¹

The fact that the socialist revolution began after many years and after passing through a particular stage does not mean at all that comrade Trotsky was right. Such an assertion would be directly contradicted by reality and based on a misunderstanding of the essence of the tactics of Bolshevism, of its, so to speak, political methodology. It reduces the inexorable movement to a single great aim, to an austere sobriety, which rejects all prejudices and all superficiality in its evaluation of each concrete situation. Here too, comrade Trotsky was wrong. And his book completely misleads the reader. We are not even speaking

19 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 91.

20 Lenin 1965a, p. 274 [emphasis added by Trotsky].

21 Lenin 1965b, p. 19.

here of how comrade Trotsky ignores the fact that he combined his 'permanent' and ultra-leftist rhetoric with a very rightist policy and with a bitter struggle against the Bolsheviks.

IV 'The Lessons of October' and the Comintern

One of the practical foundations of comrade Trotsky's 'Introduction' is the effort, to put it mildly, to 'contest' the policy of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. His task is to avenge his defeat in the discussion in 1923, when he opposed not only the line of the CC but also the general line of the Comintern. To this end he distorts the meaning of the most important episodes of the class struggle of the proletariat in Germany and in Bulgaria. Here he insinuates that the errors of several of our comrades in 1917 predetermined the failure of the Communists in Germany and Bulgaria in 1923. The logic of this reasoning is quite simple if the veil of rhetoric is stripped away. X, Y, Z erred in the Russian October. X, Y, Z now lead the Comintern. The Comintern has suffered defeats a, b, c. QED, X, Y, Z are responsible, because they persist with their practices from the Russian October. That is the long and the short of it.

This completely ridiculous syllogism has concrete facts at its base. These facts must therefore be examined critically, whereupon comrade Trotsky's entire, intricate construction will come tumbling down.

Point I. Bulgaria. Comrade Trotsky writes:

Last year we suffered two bitter defeats in Bulgaria. Firstly, the party, for *fatalistic and doctrinaire* (our emphasis, Eds.) reasons, let slip a highly propitious moment for revolutionary action (the peasant insurrection [*vosstanie*] after the June overthrow of Tsankov). Secondly, the party tried to correct its mistake by throwing itself into the September insurrection without first taking the necessary political or organisational steps.

XII²²

As the reader can clearly see, the reason for defeat here is (1) Menshevik fatalism, and (2) reckless optimism ('without preparation', etc.). Both of these features are also used to characterise the types of October opportunism. Thus, the 'connection [*smychka*]' between the Russian October and the present Comintern leadership is made in full.

22 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

But let's look at the facts more closely. The first defeat occurred because the Bulgarian Party's approach to the peasantry was completely wrong; it did not know how to evaluate either the role of the Agrarian Union [*Zemledel'cheskii soiuz*] as a whole or of its left wing in its movement. They rather took the position: 'Down with the King, and Long Live the Worker Government'. At the crucial moment when it was necessary to seize the leadership and ride the huge peasant wave, the party declared itself neutral because the struggle was between the town and rural bourgeoisie, which was of no concern to the proletariat. This was the 'reasoning' of the Bulgarian Communist Party. This was put down in writing, and all this can now be verified in the documents. To draw an analogy with our October (by the way, perhaps we should be more careful with analogies), it would be more appropriate to cite the Kornilov days (with Kerensky as Stamboliiski, and Kornilov as Tsankov). But here, even according to comrade Trotsky himself, too much support was given to Kerensky, and the 'line' between fighting Kornilov and defending Kerensky was not understood. In Bulgaria though, exactly the opposite mistake was made.

So what are the 'lessons of October' here?

At the same time the comrades in the Executive Committee of the Comintern took a completely correct position during the Kornilov days, and the entire Executive Committee quite correctly criticised and urged on the Bulgarian Communist Party.

The second defeat in Bulgaria is a fact, and comrade Trotsky describes the conditions under which it occurred. But please tell us, comrade Trotsky, whether in this case you support Plekhanov's old formula during the period of his Menshevik decline: 'There was no need to take up arms'?

Was it or was it not necessary for the Bulgarian Communists to take up arms? Yes or no?

Comrade Trotsky does not answer. In our view, it was necessary to take up arms because that was the price for maintaining contact with the peasantry which had spontaneously joined the battle. There was no time for preparation. That is the real picture of the events. Comrade Trotsky's 'Lessons' have nothing to do with it.

Point II. Germany. Even more interesting is the question of the defeat of the German proletariat last October:

'There, in the latter half of last year, we saw here a *classic* (our emphasis, Eds.) demonstration of how to let slip a perfectly exceptional revolutionary situation of world historical significance' (XI).²³

23 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

According to comrade Trotsky then, the mistake was that a 'classic' moment had been missed. It would have been necessary, no matter the cost, to wage the decisive battle, and then victory would have been ours. Here comrade Trotsky draws a direct analogy with October in Russia: there we were pushed forward, and here they were pushed forward; there – with pressure from Lenin – we were resolute, rose up, and we won; here – without pressure from Lenin – they were not resolute, and let the moment slip, and now – under the influence of the traditions of the Russian October – they write down that the forces were inadequate for the decisive battle. That is comrade Trotsky's understanding of the 'German events'.

We are confronted here with the 'realm of schematism' and the tedious realm of grey abstraction. Comrade Trotsky shows how history would have been written, had the opponents of the insurrection been in the majority in the Russian CC: it would have turned out that the forces were too few there as well, and the enemy simply terrifying, etc.

All of this is only superficially convincing. Yes, this is probably how history would have been written. But this is by no means proof that the forces of the German revolution were not overestimated in October 1923.

It is wrong to say that the moment was 'classic'. Social Democracy proved to be far stronger than we thought. The analogy with the Russian October is in general of little use here. In Germany there were no armed soldiers supporting the revolution; we had no slogan of peace; no agrarian peasant movement existed; there was no such party as ours. And yet it turned out that Social Democracy had not outlived itself. These concrete facts had to be refuted. During the decisive events, the Executive Committee of the Comintern was in favour of the October line. When it failed as a result of objective conditions and 'more than was necessary' as a result of the rightist leadership, comrade Trotsky, who had in fact supported precisely that rightist, opportunistic, and capitulationist wing and fought against the leftists²⁴ at the same time, now provides a 'deep' theoretical basis to his own conception and sets his sights on the leading circles of the Comintern. Such lessons can be drawn from neither the Russian nor the German 'October'.

There is no point at all in clinging to the many mistakes to which comrade Trotsky persists in clinging.

One of the lessons (real lessons) of the German October is that, before the uprising, the masses must be stirred up to a great degree. This work has

24 This 'method' of politics was the same as in the pre-revolutionary period: 'leftist position in words, rightist position in deeds' [original footnote].

been greatly neglected. In Hamburg, for example, there were no strikes and no soviets during the insurrection. All over Germany there were no soviets, for, in Trotsky's opinion, that was how it was supposed to be – they had been 'substituted' by the factory and plant councils. In fact, the factory and plant councils could not substitute for the soviets because they did not encompass all the masses, including the most backward and indifferent of them, as the soviets do at the critical and acute moments of the class struggle.



Comrade Trotsky's book calls for the study of October. In itself, this is not a new call. It is appropriate both for our party rank-and-file and for our foreign comrades. But comrade Trotsky's book, or rather its 'Introduction', claims to be the guide for this study. To this we must say once and for all: it cannot fulfil that role. It will only mislead those comrades who will not see, behind the superficial elegance of the account, the complete lack of proportion, the distortion of actual party history. This is not a mirror of the party. It is a distorting mirror.

This 'distorting mirror' has not appeared by chance. After everything we have said above, it is easy to see what comrade Trotsky's conclusions 'grew into', as Lenin put it.

Indeed. If, as in comrade Trotsky's erroneous portrayal, anything sensible in October 1917 could be done only in opposition to the CC, then could not such a situation arise again now? Where is the guarantee that the leadership will be correct? And is it correct now? After all, the 'only' test is October 1917. Can those who have not gone through this test be trusted? And did not the Comintern suffer defeat in Bulgaria and in Germany because of these leaders? Is it not necessary to 'study October' in order to weigh these questions?

This is the sum of those 'problems', to which comrade Trotsky is gradually leading his readers, after the failed, head-on attack of last year. Comrade Trotsky can however be absolutely certain that the party will, with time, be able to judge this quietly subversive activity. The party wants action, not new discussions. The party wants true Bolshevik unity.

‘The Komsomol and October (On Comrade Trotsky’s “The Lessons of October”)’¹

*Central Committee of Komsomol, Moscow Committee of Komsomol,
Leningrad Committee of Komsomol*

The basic Bolshevik education of the youth is the study of the history of the party. The young generation of our party will only become truly Bolshevik, the Komsomol will only deserve the name Leninist, if it is able correctly, i.e. in the spirit of Leninist teachings, to understand and assimilate the battle experience of the revolutionary struggle in the past. History is valuable to us precisely because it serves as our arsenal of weapons for the future struggle. Distorting the party’s past, and drawing wrong lessons from past experiences, can cause – and inevitably will cause – the wrong conclusions to be drawn for the present and the future. The more important the era we are talking about, the more important it is to adopt a correct, i.e. Bolshevik, approach to it.

We believe that ‘The Lessons of October’ – comrade Trotsky’s introduction to his recently published book *1917* – provides an incorrect and politically deeply harmful approach to one of the most important moments in the history of our party, the October overthrow. ‘The Lessons of October’ continues a whole series of mistakes and distortions which Trotsky has made (in a number of his former pamphlet articles and speeches) in his depictions of the stages of our party’s struggle. On the other hand, in his latest publication comrade Trotsky not only takes the historical view, he also uses the issue of the international Communist movement to outline his own political platform which diverges sharply from the position of the leading institutions of the party and the last Congress of the Comintern. The Central Committee of the RLKSM therefore cannot ignore comrade Trotsky’s actions, but considers it its duty to express its attitude to him.

¹ Tsentral'nyi Komitet RLKSM, Moskovskii K-t RLKSM, Leningradskii K-t, ‘Komsomol i Oktiabr’ (Po povodu ‘Urokov Oktiabria’ tov. Trotskogo)’, *Pravda*, no. 257, 12 November 1924, p. 2. In later compilations, the author of this article was identified as N.P. Chaplin, First Secretary of the CC of the RLKSM (see RLKSM, ‘Oktiabr’ i Komsomol. Pochemu Komsomol obiazan vystupit’ protiv oshibok tov. Trotskogo’, in *Trotskii* 1991, pp. 323–9).

We are accustomed to considering the guiding principle for every Bolshevik to be respect and loyalty for the party as *a whole*, as a fighting collective. Lenin, whose name our union proudly bears, and the party merge into one for us. Lenin never placed himself *above* the party. He was ahead of it. He saw further than anyone. But Lenin was the leader of the party, its first and best soldier and fighter, its standard-bearer. Lenin must not be separated from the party and the party must not be separated from Lenin.

The Komsomol was brought up in this spirit under Lenin's leadership. And we must therefore protest against the depiction of the Bolshevik Party and its role in the October insurrection as offered by comrade Trotsky in 'The Lessons of October'.

The Bolshevik Party, the leader of the October overthrow, is absent from the picture drawn by comrade Trotsky. Where is the Central Committee which led the struggle against Kornilov and which prepared and organised the insurrection? Where is the Petersburg Committee? Where are the districts of Petrograd, the propaganda, organisational, and fighting work in the factories and plants, in the military units? Where is the Moscow organisation? Where are the party masses which united around Lenin and supported his political line without a shadow of a doubt or a hint of vacillation? There is none of this, for it is all relegated to the background. Instead of the party, individual leaders occupy centre-stage.

On the other hand, all the mistakes made at one time or another in the course of eight months of revolution by one or another of Lenin's closest followers, one or another of the Old Bolshevik nucleus, are carefully recalled, ... selected, strung together one by one, and arranged into an orderly column so as to create a 'rightist faction' that is fighting against Lenin.

Any moments that might discredit the party as a whole in the eyes of the reader who has not experienced October or who is not adequately acquainted with the literature about it are diligently pointed out and emphasised. A majority of the Bolshevik faction at the Democratic Conference took the wrong position by supporting participation in the Pre-parliament. Comrade Trotsky informs us of this fact: 'The faction in the Democratic Conference, numbering over a hundred people, was no different at all, especially at that time, from a party congress'.² Why was it necessary for comrade Trotsky to put a faction in the Democratic Conference on a par with a party congress? This contradicts the truth because genuine congresses of the party with the right to speak in its name (the April Conference, the VI Congress) supported Lenin's position com-

² Trotsky, Document 1, p. 109.

pletely and utterly. This can only mean that he is discrediting the party as a whole by elevating individual 'saviours'.

There is no party, leaders act in the party's stead. Lenin gives counsel from afar and not without errors on practical questions (on the timing of the insurrection, on 'Soviet legality', on the start of the 'insurrection in Moscow').³ And individual leaders, with comrade Trotsky himself at their head, led the struggle independently of the party and sometimes in spite of it.

Comrade Trotsky ignores the party in his accounts of the struggle and comes close to directly slandering the Bolshevik Party. The Komsomol, with its nucleus of those who had participated in the October battles, was obliged to reject such a depiction of October, for October was the entire party's cause, with Lenin at its head.

Comrade Trotsky is sharply critical of the mistakes made by comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev in October. These mistakes are well-known to all of us and have long since been acknowledged and corrected by the very comrades who made them. Anyone who knows anything about the history of the Bolshevik Party is well-aware that the transient mistakes made by these comrades in October pale in contrast to their work and service for two decades before and after October. It is also widely known that comrade Lenin evaluated the work of these comrades and the significance of the mistakes they made. In his letter to Italian Communists in 1920, he wrote:

On the eve of the October Revolution in Russia, and immediately after it, a number of very good Communists in Russia committed an error, one which our people are now loth to recall. Why are they loth to recall it? Because, unless there is particular reason for it, it is wrong to recall mistakes which have been completely set right. [...] But a few weeks later – at most a few months – all these comrades realised their mistake and returned to their posts, some of the most responsible in the Party and the Soviets.⁴

3 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 126, 122.

4 The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'But it will be useful to recall this mistake for the benefit of the Italian workers. At the time mentioned, prominent Bolsheviks and Communists, such as Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Nogin and [Vladimir] Milyutin, wavered and expressed the fear that the Bolsheviks were isolating themselves excessively, were taking too much risk in heading for an uprising, and were too unyielding in their attitude towards a certain section of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. The conflict became so acute that these comrades demonstratively resigned from all responsible posts in Party and government, to

Obviously, these mistakes and vacillations must not be expunged from the history of the October overthrow. But it is enough to peruse 'The Lessons of October' to realise that this has nothing to do with an objective accounting of past mistakes, but is rather a bitter polemic against two comrades who occupy positions of leadership in our party, a polemic waged by comrade Trotsky over old mistakes long since corrected, and which in essence is nothing more than an attempt, after suffering complete defeat in the party discussion, to use old quarrels to force changes in current policies.

Comrade Trotsky not only finds pointed terms to describe the actual mistakes, he exaggerates and inflates the mistakes. For example, he cites the following phrase from the October letter of comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev: 'The Constituent Assembly and the Soviets are the combined form of state institutions, towards which we are moving'.⁵ He notes:

'It is extremely interesting to note in this characterisation of the overall course taken by the right that the theory of "combined" statehood, combining the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets, was repeated one and a half to two years later in Germany by Rudolf Hilferding, who was also fighting against a seizure of power by the proletariat. The Austro-German opportunist did not realise that he was plagiarising'.⁶

We cannot think of a worse slander of the members of the Communist Party than comparison with that out-and-out social scoundrel, Hilferding. But comrade Trotsky forgot what Lenin had written on 6 October 1917:

'During the transition from the old to the new there may be temporary "combined types" (as *Rabochy Put'*⁷ correctly pointed out a day or two ago) – for instance, a Soviet Republic together with a Constituent Assembly' (XIV, part 2, p. 167).⁸

It follows from this, firstly, that on the very eve of the insurrection both Lenin and the entire Central Committee of the party (*Rabochii put'*) recognised the possibility of a temporary merging of the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets, secondly, that to speak of a 'combined type' of statehood prior to

the great glee of the enemies of the Soviet revolution. It developed so far that the Central Committee of our Party conducted a very heated controversy in the press with the comrades who had resigned' (Lenin 1966c, p. 385).

5 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 110. The cited quotation is from 'K tekushchemu momentu', in *Protokoly* 1958, pp. 87–8.

6 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 110–11.

7 *Rabochii put'* [*Workers' Path*] was published in place of the banned *Pravda*, and was at that time the Central Organ of the party. The article, to which Comrade Lenin is referring, and which so dissatisfies Comrade Trotsky, belonged to Comrade Zinoviev [original footnote].

8 Lenin 1964q, p. 172.

our October overthrow is not at all the same as talking about it after the experience of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia, and, thirdly, that more care should be taken ... when drawing comparisons.

Mistakes which have been acknowledged and corrected are no danger to the party. This is why Lenin wrote that it is 'wrong to remember' them. But past mistakes become dangerous for the current struggle if they are insisted upon or if they are glossed over.

Comrade Trotsky calls for the study of October. But October is inseparably linked with the entire preceding and subsequent history of the party. In his various utterances, comrade Trotsky does not cast any light on the essence of his frequent disagreements with Lenin and even his direct struggle against Lenin, but rather rejects, conceals his former mistakes. Comrade Trotsky disagreed with Lenin on the question of the role of the peasantry in the first Russian Revolution of 1905 and on the question of 'permanent revolution'. Did comrade Trotsky acknowledge that Lenin was correct? No, on the contrary, he spoke of 'ideological rearmament' as if it were finished Bolshevism in 1917, namely that Lenin came to Trotsky's position, not vice versa. In 'The Lessons of October', he essentially repeats and develops these same views. Comrade Trotsky disagreed with Lenin during the war on a range of fundamental issues. Did he recognise that Lenin had been correct in this regard? No, he never uttered a single word about repudiating his former views, having limited himself to the statement that the February Revolution had put an end to the old disagreements. Moreover, on one basic issue – unity with the social chauvinists and centrists – Lenin, in his recently published letters from abroad, written after the February overthrow, particularly warned the party about comrade Trotsky's position.⁹ Comrade Trotsky made a great error during the Brest-Litovsk negotiations. Instead of having the Bolshevik courage to recognise his mistake, he, in his book *Lenin*, tried to conceal and soften the arguments by noting that, in the march on Warsaw, Lenin made the same mistake although 'with a smaller degree of risk'.¹⁰ Comrade Trotsky disagreed deeply with Lenin in 1921 on the issue of trade unions, and in the discussion he opposed Lenin and the entire Leninist core of the Central Committee and trade unions. Anyone who reads the protocols of the Tenth and Eleventh Congresses of the party will see that comrade Trotsky here too conceals and glosses over his own mistake. Finally, at the end of 1923 and the beginning of 1924, comrade Trotsky assumed the role of the leader of the petty-bourgeois, anti-Leninist opposition inside the RKP.

9 The reference is to Lenin 1964c, pp. 294–342.

10 This quotation is not accurate. The original quotation is 'there is a difference in the degree of risk' [*est' raznitsa v stepeni riska*] (see Trotsky 1971, p. 107).

Everyone still remembers his statement at the Thirteenth Congress of the party, in which he refused to recognise his error, despite the fact that a whole array of facts refuted all the basic assertions of the opposition.

Comrade Trotsky justifies and conceals his past mistakes. Comrade Trotsky is distorting history and the lessons of October. We must therefore declare: comrade Trotsky is stopping our youth from correctly understanding the history of the party. The writings and speeches comrade Trotsky has devoted to our party's past are an impediment to the Bolshevik education of the youth.

What is the political meaning of comrade Trotsky's actions? It is revealed in the platform on international issues, which comrade Trotsky has been developing in his recent speeches, and in 'The Lessons of October'. It is, essentially, a rightist platform. By counting on a long and relatively stable democratic pacifist era, and on the postponement of revolution in Germany, etc., comrade Trotsky is drawing closer to the right wing of the Comintern. But the opportunistic elements in the Communist International, together with the petty-bourgeois 'opposition' inside our own party, will lead an attack on the old guard of Bolshevism, on its leadership in the ranks of the RKP and Comintern. And in his 'The Lessons of October', comrade Trotsky is coming to their aid, vindicating his own past mistakes and opportunistic deviations, distorting the party's past, and undermining the trust in the old cadres of Bolshevism. Comrade Trotsky is using the leftist position in 1917 in order to reach out to the opportunists in 1924.

We accept comrade Trotsky's call to 'study October'. This call is meant of course, first and foremost, for the generation which did not go through October, but which is destined to bring October to its conclusion. But the Communist youth must study October in its entirety: its preparation, execution, and continuation. It must study the experience of October in close connection with the entire history of the Bolshevik Party. The history of October, of course, needs further study. The best source for this has been, and remains, everything that Lenin has written.

And at the same time we are against any 'study of October' which leads to its distortion and to the preparation of a rightist political platform in opposition to the political line taken by our party and by the entire Comintern. It is our task to understand, in a Leninist way [*po-leninskii*], all our party history and especially its October pages. But neither comrade Trotsky's earlier speeches nor his new book can serve as our guide on this journey.

‘On the Intolerable Distortion of Historical Facts (On Comrade Trotsky’s Article “The Uprising”¹)’²

D. Lebed’

During the last party discussion, the party came to the conclusion that one of the main deficiencies in our party education, especially the education of the young, is the lack of the most basic knowledge among many party members about the development of the history of our party, about the ideological, political, and tactical links that made up the Bolshevik philosophy, about the role of individual leaders and old revolutionary political activists in the historical events leading up to October, and in the Russian and international workers’ and revolutionary movement. We sometimes saw the most absurd things, like the ‘steadfast’ ‘oppositionist’ who appealed to Marxism and Bolshevism, and, assuming the appearance of an incontrovertible expert, tried to prove to the audience that in essence comrade Trotsky, ‘together with comrade Lenin’, directed the workers’ movement ‘from various angles’ toward a consistent, revolutionary Marxism and brought the victory of the proletarian dictatorship closer. True, these ‘historians’ quite often turned out to be former Menshevik literati and sometimes even Left Kadet newspapers, journals, and so on.

When someone who knows something about the history of the party and the workers’ movement states, let’s say, the main facts, namely that comrade Trotsky fought against the Bolsheviks, that, in the *Pravda* newspaper published in Vienna in 1911–12, he repeatedly let the Mensheviks know by his tone that Bolshevism, being a tendency isolated from the workers’ movement, was doomed to deteriorate, and that Bolshevism was a narrow, isolated, doctrinaire group, etc.; when this someone points out that at the Zimmerwald International Conference comrade Trotsky did not support the Bolsheviks on issues relating to the war, but maintained his own positions which were admittedly separate from the Mensheviks; when finally that same someone points out the

1 The article ‘The Uprising’ was taken from comrade Trotsky’s pamphlet *O Lenine (Material k biografii)* and reprinted in the book *K Oktiabriu* which was recently published by the ‘Proletarii’ publishing house [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1971, pp. 90–8].

2 D. Lebed’, ‘O nedopustimom iskazhenii istoricheskikh faktov (po povodu stat’i tov. Trotskogo “Perevorot”)', *Pravda*, no. 260, 15 November 1924, p. 2.

earlier mistakes of comrade Trotsky and his group, and even the later mistakes (the evaluation of revolutionary perspectives, the so-called 'permanent revolution', the attitude to the Brest peace: 'No war, no peace'), then in the face of all these facts, many party members, especially young ones, ask: 'Why isn't all this explained in the literature or in the lectures on the history of the party? Why for example do we know how comrades like Bukharin, Kamenev, Zinoviev behaved at this or that moment for a whole series of events of our revolution, but less about Trotsky?'

At times comrade Lenin himself informed the entire party at its congresses and in his articles of his own individual errors. After these explanations, many comrades understood again and again why the party, mainly in the form of its Bolshevik cadres, condemned comrade Trotsky's inability to acknowledge his own mistakes as rigorously and solidly.

I have observed ten or more *artemovtsy* and Communists from the workers' faculties who, when they clarified several historical events and facts relating to individual members and party groups in the past, decisively took the side of the CC, telling themselves that comrade Trotsky's mistakes today are not accidental, and are dictated by past practices he has failed to eliminate. It is just a shame that these comrades learned about these facts from sources like Martov's *Istoriia Rossiiskoi Sotsial-Demokratii* (*History of Russian Social Democracy*), and *Pis'ma P.B. Aksel'roda i Iu. O. Martova* (*Letters of Martov and Axelrod*)³ which were published by Mensheviks abroad, and that they were unable to find sources in our Istpart and other literature. This is why many local resolutions convey the need for a detailed study of the history of the party and revolutionary movement; this was also reflected in the resolution of the party congress.

But what has been done in this regard in the meantime: nothing or almost nothing. Comrade Zinoviev's history of our party⁴ explains much that is not known in other literature, but it is by no means exhaustive. For an inquisitive young generation, which is developing a party mentality, we need a history with a more detailed and comprehensive analysis.

Why is it necessary to reiterate this question and act on it? I came to this idea after reading comrade Trotsky's article, 'The Uprising'. The fine style and customary, literary polish of the article 'reeks' shamelessly of an openly subjective evaluation of events, and also of a clearly pretentious evaluation of the personal influences and positions of the individual leaders and participants in the October events, and we must address this.

3 Martov 1923a; *Pis'ma* 1924.

4 Zinov'ev 1923a; in translation as Zinovyev 1973.

Everyone who, despite their daily activities, takes a look from time to time at a pamphlet or at their own memories, knows that Leninism was put to the test as a method of proletarian tactics in October 1917, and this confirmed the correctness of Bolshevik views that had been expressed earlier by Lenin and his comrades-in-arms.

Our party carried out the October revolution in full conformity with these views which were worked out so long before the revolution. It is also well-known that the tactics of October were defined by Leninism as the tactics of the revolutionary, mass, organised insurrection. All this can be learned even if only from documents like Lenin's letter to the Moscow Committee and CC in the days before October, to the Leningrad Committee (at that time, the Petrograd Committee), and so on.⁵

According to comrade Trotsky though, Bolshevism approached the October overthrow with the wrong tactics for mass insurrection and only discovered the correct tactics on the very eve of October.

'As in July', writes Trotsky,

Lenin overrated the shrewdness and the vigor – and perhaps the material possibilities too – of our opponents. To some degree, Lenin's appraisal of the enemy had a purpose which was tactically correct: By overestimating the enemy's forces, he aimed at stimulating the party and provoking it to redouble its efforts. And yet the party could not seize power by itself, independently of the Soviets and behind its back. This would have been a mistake, the consequences of which would have affected the attitude of the workers and might have had harmful repercussions within the Petersburg garrison.⁶

What does this all mean?, the reader asks. This means, according to comrade Trotsky, that early on Lenin did not agree to postpone the insurrection until the Congress of Soviets which was set for 25 October. From this, comrade Trotsky draws the moral that he was right to warn about the need to link the insurrection with the Congress of the Soviets, for this is where, according to comrade Trotsky, the mass nature of the insurrection resides. But this is still not everything. Later on, comrade Trotsky states directly: 'I understood (i.e. Trotsky. D.L.) that it was only then that he (comrade Lenin. D.L.) finally made peace with the fact that we were not proceeding by way of a conspiracy and a plot.'⁷

5 Lenin 1964l, pp. 140–1.

6 Trotsky 1971, pp. 92–3.

7 Trotsky 1971, p. 96.

Apparently, right up to the final days before October, Lenin wanted to 'seize power by a conspiracy', while comrade Trotsky wanted – a mass insurrection.

Comrade Trotsky's judgement is very important, to put it mildly, for it is at odds with all the documents, and also with Bolshevik logic.

If comrade Trotsky has up to now believed that there can in general be no mass insurrection without the Congress of Soviets, and perhaps only a 'conspiracy', then this is not a Bolshevik analysis. It is an overestimation of a formal moment. In portraying Lenin as a Blanquist, comrade Trotsky himself stumbles away from Bolshevism.

The fact that the insurrection was carried out precisely during the Second Congress of Soviets in no way lessens comrade Trotsky's mistaken interpretation of Lenin's position.

Let's look at how Bolshevism regarded the tactics of armed insurrection. Let's begin with early statements by Lenin.

Let us, then, develop our work more extensively and set our tasks more boldly, while mastering the lessons of the great days of the Russian revolution. The basis of our work is a correct estimate of class interests and of the requirements of the nation's development at the present juncture. [...] Let us remember that a great mass struggle is approaching. It will be an armed uprising. It must, as far as possible, be simultaneous. The masses must know that they are entering upon an armed, bloody and desperate struggle.⁸

This is what Lenin wrote in his article 'Lessons of the Moscow Uprising' (v. VII, part II, pp. 51–3). Is there even a trace of conspiratorial tactics in this? The entire article simply reaffirmed the need to prepare the masses, but Trotsky concludes that only his advice forestalled conspiratorial tactics.

Let's look further at what Lenin said right before the insurrection itself:

8 The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'We are rallying, and shall continue to rally, an increasing section of the proletariat, the peasantry and the army under the slogan of overthrowing the tsarist regime and convening a constituent assembly by a revolutionary government. As hitherto, the basis and chief content of our work is to develop the political understanding of the masses. But let us not forget that, in addition to this general, constant and fundamental task, times like the present in Russia impose other, particular and special tasks. Let us not become pedants and philistines, let us not evade these special tasks of the moment, these special tasks of the given forms of struggle, by meaningless references to our permanent duties, which remain unchanged at all times and in all circumstances' (Lenin 1962a, p. 178).

It is clear that all power must pass to the Soviets. It should be equally indisputable for every Bolshevik that proletarian revolutionary power (or Bolshevik power – which is now one and the same thing) is assured of the utmost sympathy and unreserved support of all the working and exploited people all over the world in general, in the belligerent countries in particular, and among the Russian peasants especially.

from the article 'Sovety postoronnego', 8 October 1917; v. XIV, part II, pp. 269–70⁹

Finally, let's cite the Leninist positions he is responding to on conspiratorial tactics:

*To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class.*¹⁰ That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon a revolutionary upsurge of the people. That is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon that turning-point in the history of the growing revolution when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the vacillations in the ranks of the enemy and in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution are strongest. That is the third point. And these three conditions for raising the question of insurrection distinguish Marxism from Blanquism.

1917, 'Marksizm i vosstanie', v. XIV, part II, pp. 135–6¹¹

As the above citations amply show, it is surprising how sometimes one can draw very rash conclusions when one relies on one's own memory and does not know or has forgotten about the existence of documents. Although we have every reason to believe that comrade Trotsky did not write this because of forgetfulness.

The aim of the present article is not a detailed critique of comrade Trotsky's writings – this must be done as fully and quickly as possible. The party has gained such maturity and experience on the basis of its correct examination of everything pertaining to its history, its ideology and its scientific, ideological, and tactical baggage, that no subjective treatment will ever manage to deaden this robust Leninist critical spirit. However, the party's daily business of correctly educating its members demands that these kinds of writings be

9 Lenin 1964f, p. 179.

10 Emphasis throughout is ours [original footnote].

11 Lenin 1964j, pp. 22–3.

immediately explained both in terms of their errors and in terms of the reasons for their errors. For it must not be seen as a chance occurrence that none other than comrade Trotsky himself is providing such a 'mistaken' evaluation of the events before October.

This was why the party had to be sure that it had a genuine, scientific, i.e. historically accurate, text based on Leninist Bolshevik analysis, on the history of the party and the October Revolution. Furthermore, everyone who studies the party and the revolutionary movement must be able to use those historical materials which clarify theories and positions that have clearly failed (for example, Trotsky's positions before the revolution). But it must be said that while there is a pile of documents from the Brest period which are accessible to everyone and which he himself has published more than once (as well as on the individual disagreements of comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev inside the party), you will not for the life of you be able to find materials to inform yourself of the views and ideas of comrades Trotsky and Riazanov from the period of their political activity in the emigration onward as well as of a whole series of other prominent officials in the revolutionary movement.

Now, every member of the party already knows that the positions of this or that old and experienced party member, and especially of a member of leading groups, are not only of biographical interest but are also the most important factors in explaining the class and social influences on a given political actor or group. Only from this viewpoint, and from no other, is the party right and bound to know who helped give it its strong Bolshevik cast, to what extent, and by what methods, and to know the social groups and their political exponents which the party fought in order to come up with its main weapon – Leninism.

Usually, a stack of all kinds of reminiscences are written on the anniversaries of October; often they have been much reworked over a long period in the minds of the authors rather in the direction of their desire than in the direction of reality; this is all relatively innocent if it is a kind of belletriste reworking of some facts and events, of which the author of the reminiscences is well-aware. But this innocence becomes something serious when facts, events, and the entire history are marshaled to justify political positions. This is no longer a personal matter but concerns the entire party, and this is by no means an innocent desire to mark the pages of history and share one's reminiscences with others, but is a serious political enterprise with serious political consequences. And if history is distorted in the process, this is intolerable.

The only way to look at comrade Trotsky's article is to understand that it is seamlessly concealing serious political intentions. This is why it is urgently necessary, not for the eighth anniversary but for the entire eighth year of the

proletarian revolution, to provide the party with a really political, really truthful history of October based on a genuinely Leninist analysis.

Such a history can only be the task (probably a collective task) under the supervision of the leading organ of the party – its Central Committee.

‘How Should the History of October be Approached? (Comrade Trotsky’s “The Lessons of October”)’¹

G. Sokol'nikov

The number of historical works, memoirs, collections, and documents devoted to 1917 and the October overthrow is growing rapidly. Nevertheless, both 1917 and October still await their historian. We must agree with Comrade Trotsky that ‘to date, we do not have a single work, which provides a general picture of the October overthrow, emphasising its most important political and organisational moments’² (‘The Lessons of October’, introduction to the recently published third volume of his *Collected Works*). We must also agree with Comrade Trotsky that October has to be studied more closely. We cannot however agree with comrade Trotsky’s methods for ‘studying October’, nor with his conclusions from this study. Precisely because the history of the preparation of October and the history of the October overthrow exist only in fragments, and precisely because the documents have not been collected or systematised, and precisely because generally speaking some of the most important facts have not been definitively documented, all those who write about the events of 1917, if they want to get close to the historical truth and if they recognise their responsibility to other readers who believe their words, are duty-bound to gather and weigh with the utmost care the facts on which they build their generalisations. This is not how comrade Trotsky has written the history of October, and he must be reproached for this. Indeed, having focussed quite ‘deliberately’ on the disagreements among the leaders of the Bolsheviks in 1917, (and in spite of the repeated, very eloquent, but unconvincing caveats about his ‘reluctance’ to turn the mistakes of certain Bolsheviks in October into a weapon against them now), he has abandoned the stance of some kind of objective ‘chronicler’ and ‘pedagogue’ in favour of that of a passionate public prosecutor who has been charged with maliciously assembling an indictment, in favour of the role of an

1 G. Sokol'nikov, ‘Kak podkhodit' k istorii Oktiabria? (Po povodu “Urokov Oktiabria” tov. Trotskogo)’, *Pravda*, no. 263, 19 November 1924, pp. 2–3, and simultaneously in *Bol'shevik*, no. 14, 1924, pp. 105–13.

2 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 86.

'unmasker' who addresses the history of the party 'from the outside'. The methods of 'studying' October however have suffered desperately from this approach of prosecution and exposure. For the prosecutor cannot resist the temptation to try to prove his case by looking into people's hearts, by using circumstantial evidence, by invoking 'reliable' witnesses, etc., who are however no longer able to speak for themselves, i.e. he resorts to measures which do not so much explain as complicate matters. Let's begin with an example of lesser significance, but which nonetheless throws into stark relief how comrade Trotsky has turned the history of the October overthrow 'on its head'. This example is the history of the April demonstration.

Lenin's speech at the Finland Station about the socialist character of the Russian Revolution came as a bombshell to many party leaders. The polemic between Lenin and the supporters of 'achieving a democratic revolution' began from that very first day. A sharp conflict arose around the armed demonstrations in April with their slogan 'Down with the Provisional Government!' That episode caused some representatives of the right wing to accuse Lenin of Blanquism: the overthrow of the Provisional Government, which was at that time supported by the Soviet majority, could be achieved, if you please, only by circumventing the majority of the workers. In formal terms the accusation might not have been unpersuasive, but in fact there was not a shadow of Blanquism in Lenin's April policy ... The April demonstration, which moved more to 'the left' than was expected, was a reconnaissance sortie to survey the mood of the masses and the relationship between them and the Soviet majority ... Lenin, having surveyed the situation, shelved the call for the immediate overthrow of the Provisional Government.³

That is what comrade Trotsky wrote. In his exposition, (1) the armed April demonstration was the subject of a sharp clash between Lenin and many leaders of the party; (2) Lenin was in favour of the armed April demonstration which had moved to the 'left' under the slogan 'Down with the Provisional Government', and was in favour of observing the situation, whereupon he withdrew this slogan; (3) Lenin's position vis-à-vis the April demonstration gave the 'right wing' the pretext for accusing him of Blanquism. Let's take a look at the documents. Here is Lenin's article in *Pravda* on 23 April, 'The Lessons of the Crisis'. Lenin concludes it this way:

3 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 100–1.

The lesson is clear, comrade workers! There is no time to be lost. The first crisis will be followed by others. You must devote *all* your efforts to enlightening the backward ... *All* your efforts must be devoted to consolidating your own ranks ... Do *not* be misled by those of the petty bourgeoisie who 'compromise' with the capitalists, by the defencists and by the 'supporters', *nor by individuals who are inclined to be in a hurry and to shout 'Down with the Provisional Government!' before the majority of the people are solidly united. The crisis cannot be overcome by violence practised by individuals against individuals, by the local action of small groups of armed people, by Blanquist attempts to 'seize power', to 'arrest' the Provisional Government, etc.* (our emphasis). Today's task is to explain more precisely, more clearly, more widely the proletariat's policy, its way of terminating the war ... Rally round your Soviets; and within them endeavour to rally behind you a majority by comradely persuasion and by re-election of individual members.⁴

In the same issue of *Pravda*, in the article 'How a Simple Question Can Be Confused', Lenin ridiculed the distortion of the true position of the Bolsheviks by the bankers' newspaper *Den*:

Anybody who says 'take the power' should not have to think long to realise that an attempt to do so *without as yet* having the backing of the majority of the people would be adventurism or Blanquism (*Pravda* has made a special point of warning against this in the clearest, most unmistakable and unequivocal terms). There is a degree of freedom now in Russia that enables the will of the majority to be gauged by the make-up of the Soviets. Therefore, to make a serious, not a Blanquist, bid for power, the proletarian party must fight for influence within the Soviets.⁵

Finally, on 25 April, Lenin came out with the article 'Foolish Gloating': '*Rabochaya Gazeta* (Menshevik)', he writes,

gloats and crows over the recent resolution of the Central Committee (the content of the resolution coincides with the content of the cited article by Lenin 'Lessons of the Crisis', G. Sok.) which has revealed (in connection, be it noted, with the now published declaration of the representatives of

4 Lenin 1964s, p. 216.

5 Lenin 1964t, p. 217.

the Bolshevik fraction of the Soviet⁶) certain disagreements within our Party. The Mensheviks may gloat and crow as much as they like. It does not worry us in the least ... Small wonder that people who have neither an organisation nor a party crow and caper light-heartedly at discovering a fault in somebody else's organisation ... We have no reason to fear the truth ... The crisis revealed a very feeble attempt to move 'slightly leftward' of the Central Committee. Our Central Committee did not yield, and we do not doubt for a moment that harmony within our Party is already being restored, a harmony that is voluntary, intelligent, and complete.⁷

And so, in April Lenin was: (1) against those individuals who tended to be in too much of a hurry to proclaim 'Down with the Provisional Government' before the majority of the people were firmly united; (2) against Blanquist attempts and individual actions by small groups of armed people; (3) against the very weak attempts to take a course 'slightly more to the left' of the CC, and he branded as 'foolish Schadenfreude' the Mensheviks' exaggeration of this very minor disagreement within our party. But with whom did he have the mysterious 'sharp clash' over the April demonstration that Trotsky makes so much of? Despite what comrade Trotsky said, it was not with the 'right wing' of the leadership of the party but with a small group of Petrograd party officials led by then

6 This declaration, together with the editorial comment, was published in *Pravda*, no. 39. We quote it in full:

'THE ATTENTION OF COMRADES!

Comrades Langevich (Lashevich? – G.S.), Krymov and [Ivan] Mavrin, authorised by the Bolshevik group of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, ask us to declare that the overwhelming majority of the workers who took part in the manifestations on April 20 and 21 and carried 'Down with the Provisional Government!' placards, understood this slogan to mean exclusively that all power should be transferred to the Soviets and that the workers want to take over only after winning a majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. The present composition of the Soviet does not quite express the will of the majority of the workers' and soldiers' masses. That is why the Bolshevik group believes that the C.C. resolution of April 22 does not give a precise characteristic of the present state of affairs.

From the Editors. It goes without saying that the C.C. resolution is in no sense aimed against the organisers of the mass demonstrations, and that such an interpretation of the slogan rules out any idea of thoughtlessness or adventurism. At any rate, the peaceful and impressively massive character of these manifestations is to the great credit of these comrades as representing the organisers of the manifestations. They alone organised a fitting rebuff to the bourgeoisie, which was demonstrating in favour of its own Provisional Government' [original footnote] [Lenin 1969a, p. 407].

7 Lenin 1964u, p. 223.

secretary of the PK, comrade [Sarkis] Bogdat'ev. These comrades took a course 'slightly more to the left' of the CC, and it was they who were condemned by the resolutions of the CC and by Lenin's article rejecting their action as a Blanquist attempt to 'seize power', to 'arrest' the Provisional Government, and so on. So comrade Trotsky, who claims to have made a 'profound' analysis, has muddled everything up: (1) the April demonstration was not the subject of a sharp, or any other kind of, clash between Lenin and the other members of the CC; (2) Lenin was not in favour of any demonstration that was to the left of the CC line; (3) it was not Lenin who was accused by the 'right wing' of Blanquism over the April demonstration, but it was he who, in connection with the mistakes of a small group in the April demonstration, condemned Blanquist tactics (the discussions at the April Conference changed nothing in this picture). How could comrade Trotsky make such a mistake, a mistake that is true to 'history' as depicted in the newspaper *Den'* and as written by the Menshevik Sukhanov, but which conflicts with the real history of our party? This is possible because he has been carried away by his prosecutorial methods of marshalling evidence for a predetermined goal, because instead of precise analysis of the disagreements, vacillations, errors, instead of determining their actual limits, instead of placing them in the historical context of the development of the Leninist line, as deviations on one side or the other, but as deviations nonetheless which always clung, despite the sharpness of the disagreement, to the fundamental core of Bolshevism, he tries to depict the history of Bolshevism before October as a struggle between two parties within one party.

This is precisely why comrade Trotsky, contradicting the historical record, has to maintain that the 'arrangement of figures' in the October insurrection was planned several months before by the 'arrangement of figures' during the April campaign of comrade Bogdat'ev and the 'individualist' Linde in the Mariinsky Palace. Comrade Trotsky urgently needed to prove the whole 'logicality [*zakonomernost'*]' of the disagreements that took place in October. That is why for him 'April' anticipated 'October'. This mistake by comrade Trotsky – and this is very important – contains all the specific features of his 'research': a very poor grasp of information, a great deal of 'Schadenfreude', and a campaign by a hostile 'unmasker'.

Let us turn now to the September–October period. Sketching out the position of Lenin and of the CC of the party from the time of the Democratic Conference to the day of the insurrection, comrade Trotsky 'cleverly' divides the disagreements between Lenin and the CC into two categories: (1) those on which comrade Trotsky shared Lenin's views – in those cases, according to comrade Trotsky's current depiction, the CC deviated towards a right-wing position and lapsed into 'Social-Democratism'; and (2) those on which com-

rade Trotsky shared the position of the CC and split with Lenin – in those cases, comrade Trotsky was prepared to 'justify' the CC. Thus, with regard to the Petrograd Soviet's protest against Kerensky's order to send part of the garrison to the front, comrade Trotsky notes: 'Lenin, who was not in Petrograd, did not appreciate the full significance of this fact'.⁸ And later: Lenin was unable 'from the underground..., to assess the radical shift not only in the mood but also in the organisational ties among the entire military rank-and-file and hierarchy after the 'silent' insurrection of the capital's garrison in the middle of October'.⁹

The clever manipulation of the disagreements between the CC and Lenin – the matter being presented so that the CC is correct whenever it agrees with comrade Trotsky, and Lenin is wrong whenever he disagrees with comrade Trotsky – is intended to portray the CC of the party before October as an institution which was in thrall to the right wing and accepted the insurrection only after Lenin's 'persistent, tireless, relentless pressure'.¹⁰ This is not a description but a distortion of the history of October. Of course 'Lenin's persistent, tireless, relentless pressure on the Central Committee throughout September and October' energised the CC and did not allow it to forget for a moment its duty of insurrection. He literally electrified the CC and the party organisations. That is how Lenin worked and he could do no other. But the CC, as the direct organiser of the insurrection and without deviating from Lenin's fighting instructions for a moment, had to assess the situation accurately, and at the same time choose the methods, place, and timing of the insurrection in order to ensure its victory. Participation in the Democratic Conference and participation in the Pre-parliament happened largely because of Lenin's warnings against dangerous deviations, and in such a way that it did not cause the negative results which of course were possible and which comrade Lenin rightly feared, but allowed the Bolsheviks to prepare politically and organise for insurrection. The historian can now state this calmly and dispassionately. Even though Lenin condemned participation in the Democratic Conference and the Pre-parliament,¹¹ he was

8 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 122.

9 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 122.

10 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 114.

11 Regarding the Democratic Conference, Lenin wrote in his article, 'The Heroes of Fraud', in *Rabochii put'* on 24 September: 'The Bolshevik participation in this hideous fraud, in this farce, had the same justification as their participation in the Third Duma; even in a "pigsty" we must uphold our line, even from a "pigsty" we must send out material exposing the enemy for the instruction of the people'. He viewed participation differently in a letter dated 22 September, although this was apparently written later: '*We should have boycotted the Democratic Conference; we all erred by not doing so, but mistakes are no crime. We shall*

even more sharply critical of the CC policy from the end of September to the day of the insurrection – the linking of the insurrection with the convening of the Congress of Soviets which seemed to him a policy of unnecessary ‘procrastination’. Comrade Trotsky quotes the following from Lenin: “‘There is a tendency, or an opinion”, Lenin wrote on 29 September, “in our Central Committee and among the leaders of our Party which favours waiting for the Congress of Soviets, and is opposed to taking power immediately, is opposed to an immediate insurrection. That tendency, or opinion, must be overcome”’.¹² At the start of October, Lenin wrote: *‘Delay is criminal. To wait for the Congress of Soviets would be a childish game of formalities, a disgraceful game of formalities, and a betrayal of the revolution’* (our emphasis).¹³ In the theses for the Petersburg Conference on 8 October, Lenin wrote: ‘It is necessary to fight against constitutional illusions and hopes placed in the Congress of Soviets’.¹⁴ But what does comrade Trotsky say about Lenin’s characterisation of the preparation of the Congress of Soviets? Comrade Trotsky seizes with such ‘Schadenfreude’ on any angry remark made by Lenin about any of the Bolsheviks, ‘naively’ ignores the tactical thinking that Lenin hides behind this or that expression in these cases, and consciously ‘lays it on thick’ if he can exaggerate the remark into a sign of a ‘crisis in the party’. How does he evaluate Lenin’s evaluation of the CC’s plan with which comrade Trotsky was also in agreement? This time, comrade Trotsky does not accept the inspired evidence that the ‘betrayal of the revolution’ and ‘constitutional illusions’ lead directly to bourgeois parliamentarianism, etc. Comrade Trotsky is in no rush, having pettily seized on the literal meaning of Lenin’s words, to ‘register himself’ as a Social Democrat: he evaluates the accusations directed at him personally, not as a spiteful unmasker but as a politician. In

correct the mistake only if we have a sincere desire to support the revolutionary struggle of the masses’. These were Lenin’s two different attitudes towards participation in the Democratic Conference. This, however, did not stop the unceremonious author of the notes to Comrade Trotsky’s book from writing: ‘In the disagreements over the question of participation in the Democratic Conference and the boycott of the Pre-parliament, Lenin supported the boycotters in the most categorical way’. Listen Comrade Annotator: it is possible to ‘annotate’, but you still have to know and weigh things! And for these kinds of ‘annotations’, Comrade Trotsky bears the responsibility! This is the kind of ‘sauce’ used to serve the history of October! All this is unsurprising, by the way, since Comrade Trotsky adopted a completely mendacious, un-Leninist tone on the question of the October mistakes of several Bolsheviks [original footnote]. [Lenin 1964i, pp. 45–6; Lenin 1964v, p. 57].

12 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 121. Lenin’s quotation is from Lenin 1964k, p. 82.

13 Lenin 1964l, p. 141.

14 Lenin 1964m, p. 144.

other cases, he finds this method 'superfluous'. He begins with a modest remark: 'All these letters, every sentence of which was hammered out on the anvil of revolution, are exceptionally interesting both for what they tell us about Lenin and about their evaluation of the moment'.¹⁵ He then meticulously proves that the concrete plan of insurrection of the CC was by no means bad. Then again, comrade Trotsky is undoubtedly exaggerating when he imagines the disastrous consequences that could have ensued from the plan, of which Lenin spoke, to begin the insurrection in Moscow. In vain, completely in vain, comrade Trotsky represents this as if Lenin's unrealised plan to designate Moscow as the start of the insurrection had nearly threatened the success of the insurrection! Why? There is little sense now in trying to guess how Lenin would have conducted the preparations for the insurrection if he had not been forced to hide from Kerensky's bloodhounds. There is little sense now in speculating whether the insurrection might have been successful a month earlier.¹⁶

Only one thing is certain: Lenin's criticism of the participation of the Bolsheviks in the Democratic Conference and the Pre-parliament was part and parcel of the plan of the insurrection drawn up by him and which was to be carried out independently of the Congress of Soviets; the tactics of the Central Committee vis-à-vis the Democratic Conference, and not so much 'joining' as 'passing through' the Pre-parliament (entering the Pre-parliament in order actually to 'participate' in it would, of course, have been a dangerous mistake,

15 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 121.

16 Once again, Comrade Trotsky misrepresents Lenin's formulation of the question of the timing of the insurrection. Comrade Trotsky writes: 'In September, during the Democratic Conference, Lenin demanded immediate insurrection'. No, Lenin formulated his 'demand' much more carefully. How, in fact, does Lenin conclude his famous paragraph on the surrounding of the Alexandrinka, on the occupation of the Peter and Paul Fortress, on the arrest of the General Staff and the government, etc., in his letter to the CC in the days of the Democratic Conference? Lenin concludes his 'action programme' for the insurrection with the following phrase: 'Of course, this is all by way of example, only to illustrate the fact that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to Marxism, to remain loyal to the revolution unless insurrection is treated as an art'. In another letter to the CC, written during the same days, Lenin writes quite clearly: 'We are concerned now not with the "day", or "moment" of insurrection in the narrow sense of the word. That will be only decided by the common voice of those who are in contact with the workers and soldiers, with the masses ... The point is to make the task clear to the Party. The present task must be an armed uprising in Petrograd and Moscow (with its region), the seizing of power and the overthrow of the government. We must consider *how* to agitate for this without expressly saying as much in the press' [original footnote]. [The quotations in this footnote are from, resp.: Trotsky, Document 1, p. 120; Lenin 1964j, p. 27; Lenin 1964w, pp. 20–1].

but this mistake was not made at all), were part and parcel of the plan to proclaim Soviet power at the Congress of Soviets and at the same time to secure this power by an armed overthrow of the Kerensky government. Of course, all of Lenin's 'pressure' against the potential danger of 'constitutional illusions' and against substituting the task of seizing power with the tasks of acquiring a majority in the Congress of Soviets was extremely necessary [*arkhi-nuzhen*] and useful. Comrade Trotsky at that time steered a course between these two variants of insurrectionary strategy, a course which contained no differences of principle, only logistical concerns. Comrade Trotsky is now trying to benefit from this middle position *by presenting both the CC and Lenin in an ambiguous fashion*. In fact however, it was precisely the combination of Lenin's principled leadership of the party and the practical leadership of the preparation for the insurrection by the CC and the Petrograd and Moscow Committees that ensured the victory of October in spite of mistakes by the most prominent Bolsheviks. One more time: the CC and Lenin were one, and pedantic attempts to represent them as opposing each other are ridiculous; the CC had no other 'line' than Lenin's 'line'. But it was precisely this deepest harmony, namely the unity of Lenin and the party, that enabled the CC not to regard Lenin as an authority in opposition to it whose every 'instruction' had to be carried out to the letter. It was precisely on the basis of this deepest harmony and collaboration that the CC could convert the political leadership of Lenin into the practical work of the party. There would have been no genuine unity without this co-operation within the CC between Lenin and other members of the CC (including comrade Trotsky who knew how to work as a member of the collective at that time).

For the sake of history and the accurate representation of the relationship between the CC and Lenin, it is useful at this point to reconstruct the series of 'disagreements' between Lenin and the CC in the period between July and October. After the July days, Lenin proposed that the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets' be completely withdrawn until power had been seized, and that then new revolutionary Soviets could be created. Lenin's proposal was not adopted in this actual form. The Kornilov conspiracy [*zagovor*], which again enabled the Bolsheviks successfully to resume the work of winning majorities in the Soviets, justified the more careful line of the CC with which Lenin agreed at that time. In connection with this, another disagreement arose: Lenin advised that an illegal party apparatus be built and an illegal newspaper published as he did not believe it would be possible to maintain the legal organ of the CC in Petrograd in the future. The CC however decided to maintain an open organisation and legal press while of course combining 'legality' with 'conspiracy' whenever necessary. It managed to hold the Sixth Congress of the

party soon after the July days in Petrograd with a minimum of conspiratorial precautions. The counter-revolution was not yet organised and unified enough to be able to suppress our press and organisation completely. The organ of the CC was banned under one name, but soon reappeared under another, etc. In the Kornilov days, Lenin came out with his article 'On Compromises'. The editors of the central organ opposed the publication of the article on the grounds that the current situation provided no basis for proposing a 'compromise'. Lenin insisted on its publication – it appeared two days later in *Rabochii put'*; of course, on this occasion Lenin was right, not the editors of the central organ who wanted to take a course 'slightly more to the left' of Lenin. What was this compromise that Lenin had conditionally proposed? Lenin wrote:

The compromise would amount to the following: the Bolsheviks, without making any claim to participate in the government (which is impossible for the internationalists unless a dictatorship of the proletariat and the poor peasants has been realised), *would refrain from demanding the immediate transfer of power to the proletariat and the poor peasants and from employing revolutionary methods of fighting for this demand* (our emphasis). A condition that is self-evident and not new to the S.R.s and Mensheviks would be complete freedom of propaganda *and the convocation of the Constituent Assembly without further delays or even at an earlier date*.¹⁷

That was Lenin's proposal. He took this tactical step on 3 September 1917. Trotsky does not have a word to say about any of this. But anyone who wants to give a true picture of Bolshevism before October and during the October days cannot ignore the article 'On Compromises'. If this article is ignored, it is impossible to form a picture of Lenin's tactics; if this article is ignored, it is impossible to understand the true nature of Zinoviev and Kamenev's vacillations and Lenin's attitude to the party and to their vacillations. Anyone who wants confusion rather than clarity must ignore Lenin's article, 'On Compromises'. Unfortunately, that is what comrade Trotsky did.

These cursory remarks make no claim of course to throw any light on the 'general picture of the October overthrow'. They are intended merely to show the entire deviousness of comrade Trotsky's 'schemes', and sketch out the actual relationships in the party before October as they existed at the time. For comrade Trotsky everything proceeds in linear fashion [*po lineike*]; but the facts must never be lined up in columns like soldiers on parade. This produces the

17 Lenin 1964x, p. 307.

blatant errors, contradictions, and severe distortions that abound in comrade Trotsky's 'research'. In the real world, everything is different: Lenin and the CC, together with basic Bolshevik cadres, manoeuvred in the most complicated and changing conditions; and both Lenin and the others sometimes made mistakes (of course, Lenin's 'mistakes' were of a special kind) as they felt their way, and they acknowledged those mistakes. Some were left behind at sharp turns, others rushed too far ahead. But the front always dressed ranks in short order. No political party would have been able to travel the path from February to October without disagreements, deviations, mistakes. The Bolshevik Party took this path in closer formation than any other party could. Of course the party was not operating in a vacuum. It withstood the pressure from other [*smezhnye*] classes and strata. To a certain extent it had to reckon with them and adapt its tactics to them. It strove to bring these groups one by one under its leadership. When should it give in and wait, how long should it wait, what are the limits of any concessions it should make? These questions exist, and they are ignored only by those who imagine that in politics, as in geometry, a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. Unlike such politicians, Lenin manoeuvred, took detours, retreated – and then attacked ferociously. The disagreements among the Bolsheviks in 1917 can be represented as a struggle between two parties within a single party only by the 'historian' who intentionally judges the party 'from the outside'. If comrade Trotsky were right in his assessment of the internal disagreements among the Bolsheviks, if there had really been two parties within the party, then the disagreements would inevitably have led to crises in the party, i.e. to the kinds of crises that would have split organisations apart or split them from the CC. This however did not happen in 1917. Disagreements in spring 1918 over the Brest Peace shook the party much more severely than the October disagreements which remained on the surface. If comrade Trotsky has now placed the mistakes of a few Bolsheviks in October at the centre of his own 'study of October', he has thereby doomed his attempt at 'study' to complete failure.

So what are the 'lessons' that comrade Trotsky draws from his 'study of October'? Alas, he has not come up with any conclusions. Why? Because these 'conclusions' are of a kind that the author himself would find awkward to 'formulate'! Therefore everything boils down to innuendos about the need for the kind of 'leadership personnel' who would not 'drift along on the current', and to an intensified attack with 'chemical' shells on the present leadership of the party under cover of the white flag of the 'study of October'. This though is not a new lesson at all, but a 'repeat of what we have already been through', a footnote to last year's 'discussion'. And as those 'experiences' are still quite clear in everyone's memory, and as no one has any desire to 'repeat those

experiences’ again, comrade Trotsky is in fact surrendering in vain to that ‘unknown force’ which pulls him again and again to the ‘dismal banks’ of the currents of discussion!

‘On Comrade Trotsky’s “The Lessons of October”’¹

N. Babakhan

Comrade Trotsky has written ‘The Lessons of October’ as a formal call for the need to study ‘October’ as the greatest proletarian overthrow, an experience which will help the sections of the Comintern to ease the ‘birth-pangs’ of their own Octobers.

In this context, hardly anyone would challenge the correctness of comrade Trotsky’s call; but if we take the ‘formal’ reasons that are concealing his *action* [*vystuplenie*], (let’s put it bluntly – his attack on the CC, the majority of the party, on the foundations of Leninism), then *comrade Trotsky* has it only *half* right, not completely right.

The experience of October must be studied by the Comintern sections, by the youth, and also by our entire party as a whole.

But can the experience of just one October – even in itself a highly instructive one – isolated from the whole chain of the *pre-October* and *post-October* experience – really provide a clear picture of all the lessons of the proletarian revolution?

October is just one *link* – true, an extremely important one, in fact a key link – in the general historical chain of our party and revolution.

This ‘key link’ must not be studied in isolation from everything that happened before and after it, for this will not give a true picture of the historical lessons of October.

In his book comrade Trotsky states that ‘the party can and must know its *entire* past if it is to be able to evaluate it correctly and assign proper significance to each part of it’ (p. LXII).² This is correct, but it follows from *this* viewpoint that one stage in the history of the party (even a colossally important stage like October) must not be singled out; it is necessary to study the *entire* history.

It is absurd, it is un-Marxist, to start the study of the history of the party only from 1917, when the party’s victory in 1917 was the result of the entire

1 Babakhan 1925, pp. 60–9. The introduction indicates that this piece was the stenogram of one of the reports delivered by N. Babakhan and Morozov to a party meeting in Kazan’ on 25 November 1924. For this published volume, the stenogram was furnished with references.

2 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 133.

'preparatory' stage of history up to 1917 that comrade Trotsky refers to with such disdain.

If analogies are permitted – just as comrade Trotsky himself uses analogies – a military analogy might be used to show that the outcome of the fighting in a war is a direct result – apart from everything else – *mainly* of the warring armies' degree of readiness for battle.

A three-quarters readiness for war, or even a nine-tenths readiness for war, predetermines the outcome of the battle.

But enough of this! *After victory, consolidation is necessary* – to ignore this moment as well does not provide the entire 'experience' of the *clashes* and all the 'lessons' of these battles. In 'Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder', Lenin wrote: 'only the history of Bolshevism *during the entire period* of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it has been able to build up and maintain, under most difficult conditions, the iron discipline *needed for the victory of Bolshevism*'.³

And so the correct Leninist approach to the study of the history of the party is not to single out individual moments, but to study the experience and lessons of 'the entire period'.

Why do we not get from Trotsky the *entire* history, including the history of the struggle against Trotsky himself?

This is perhaps understandable in a personal sense, but in an objective sense by ignoring and underestimating the *past* lessons before October, even before February, he made the crudest errors in his analysis of the revolutionary events and prospects.

In particular comrade Trotsky's past errors (before 1917) lead to comrade Trotsky's erroneous assessment of the February Revolution, of the circumstances that resulted in the end of tsarism, and also of comrade Lenin's April Theses.

I have already spoken about the April Theses earlier; let's look at how comrade Trotsky understood the February overthrow, where he went wrong, and how it contrasted with comrade Lenin's understanding of these same events.

How did comrade Trotsky understand the nature and significance of the February Revolution of 1917?

He writes: 'the period following the February overthrow can be seen in two ways: *either* as a period of consolidation, development or completion of

3 Lenin 1966b, p. 24. Babakhan has replaced Lenin's original term 'victory of the proletariat' with 'victory of Bolshevism'.

the “democratic” revolution, *or* as a period of preparation for the proletarian revolution’ (1917, p. XVIII).⁴

This formulation of the question is methodologically wrong at its core.

This is not a dialectical, Leninist formulation of the question.

Lenin considered the February Revolution to be the ‘first stage’ of the revolution, and *did not pit* the democratic revolution against the proletarian revolution, *as Trotsky does here*.

The question was not and could not be posed in the way comrade Trotsky put it: *either-or*, but rather *both-and*. For it is clear that only by completing and consolidating the ‘democratic’ revolution – this could not be achieved just by ‘moving in place’ – could we move on to the proletarian revolution, for, after all, the very fact that the democratic foundations of the overthrow were consolidated is a well-known, significant step in the direction of the subsequent, higher phase of the revolution, the start of the transition from the ‘first stage’ to the next stage.

It might even be said that the ‘more democratic’ the democratic revolution, the greater the preconditions for progress. The *uniqueness* of the February overthrow is that it (the revolution) created revolutionary organs which, already during the period of the democratic overthrow, contained the elements and tools for the proletarian revolution. *In the depths of the February events, the roar of October could already be heard*. And to pose the question as an *either-or* question is to miss the whole uniqueness and ‘particularity’ of the February Revolution of 1917. After all, we have long known that the correct recognition of the historical processes and events demands in turn that *specific* features of every given historical stage be recognised and analysed, not the general *either-or* formulations we get from comrade Trotsky.

It was *not a question of counterposing* the democratic revolution to the proletarian socialist revolution, but of the unique conditions when ‘dual power’ ruled under the system of ‘two dictatorships’ when the democratic revolution was ‘pregnant’ with the socialist overthrow and the former (democratic) revolution was evolving into the latter (socialist) revolution.

Without understanding the ‘uniqueness’ that comrade Lenin wrote about and insisted upon both in his ‘Letters from Afar’ and in his ‘April Theses’ of 1917, it is impossible to understand anything or draw any ‘lessons’ from the events of the 1917 revolution.⁵

Comrade Trotsky forgets this as well; that is his mistake.

4 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 92.

5 Lenin 1964c, pp. 295–342; Lenin 1964d, pp. 19–26.

Starting with his underestimation of the pre-October experience of the party and his incorrect understanding of the 'uniqueness' of the situation that existed after the February overthrow, comrade Trotsky makes a whole series of new, very significant errors.

Comrade Trotsky states that 'without a party, separately from a party, bypassing a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot triumph' (p. LX).⁶

This is indisputable; but these are just words.

And something has happened again with comrade Trotsky that often happens with him in general.

The words are correct in their evaluation, but when he tries to apply these correct, *spoken* statements in a concrete way, there is a complete disconnect between the words and their actual, concrete substance.

His words acknowledge the party as the only 'historical instrument', without which it is impossible to conceive of the proletarian revolution being victorious or of revolutionary theory being put to the correct test; but when he analyses the events of the greatest proletarian overthrow that is the Russian October – he completely ignores the role and significance of the party.

The entire analysis of 'The Lessons of October' is such that when you read it, you involuntarily ask yourself the question – where are the worker and soldier *masses*, where is the class – the hegemon of the revolution, where is the *party* of this class?

All the significant and insignificant facts about the behaviour, positions, and differences of individuals, leaders, etc. are analysed, researched, and recorded here, but we look in vain in comrade Trotsky's book for the masses, the party organisation with its roiling moods, its will, demands and resoluteness, etc.

And yet the documents of the period could tell us some extremely instructive things about the positions and moods of the party and worker masses – this would be just as instructive both for the young generation and for the Comintern sections whose education so interests comrade Trotsky. But we have already said that comrade Trotsky's errors flow one from the other; they have their own internal logic, so to speak.

In underestimating the role and significance of the party and worker masses, comrade Trotsky naturally tends to shift his focus *to the upper ranks* and then *overestimate* the significance of the errors made by individual comrades in the leadership.

6 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 132.

Comrades Zinoviev, Kamenev, Nogin and others made mistakes during the October days. These mistakes were investigated by the party and especially by comrade Lenin; these comrades themselves acknowledged their mistakes long ago and have openly spoken about them repeatedly, unlike Trotsky who generally does not acknowledge his mistakes.

And precisely because these mistakes were acknowledged and quickly put an end to – they remained at the surface of the events and did not cause any serious harm to the struggle of the proletariat. Comrade Lenin, who is distinguished by his fierce ruthlessness with any deviations that are based on principle and that threaten to divert the cause from the true path of revolutionary struggle, said of these mistakes:

On the eve of the October Revolution in Russia, and immediately after it, a number of very good Communists in Russia committed an error, one which our people are now loth to recall. Why are they loth to recall it? Because, unless there is particular reason for it, it is wrong to recall mistakes which *have been completely set right* [...] [A] few weeks later – at most a few months – all these comrades realised their mistake and returned to their posts, some of the most responsible in the Party and the Soviets.

LENIN, *Sobr. Sochinenii*, v. XVII, p. 373⁷

What was the mistake made by these comrades? The mistake was that some comrades underestimated the reactionary nature of the conciliationist parties and especially of the Mensheviks. Hence the well-known vacillations of these comrades and their disagreement with Lenin and the majority of the CC in the October days.

Comrade Trotsky is inclined to interpret this mistake, which was put an end to in good time and once and for all, as a 'Social-Democratic deviation' in

7 Lenin 1966c, p. 385. The emphasis is Babakhan's. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'But it will be useful to recall this mistake for the benefit of the Italian workers. At the time mentioned, prominent Bolsheviks and Communists, such as Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Nogin and Milyutin, wavered and expressed the fear that the Bolsheviks were isolating themselves excessively, were taking too much risk in heading for an uprising, and were too unyielding in their attitude towards a certain section of the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries. The conflict became so acute that these comrades demonstratively resigned from all responsible posts in Party and government, to the great glee of the enemies of the Soviet revolution. It developed so far that the Central Committee of our Party conducted a very heated controversy in the press with the comrades who had resigned. But ...'.

our party, as the manifestation of the capitulationist moods of those who had drifted along on the current and 'rose up against the insurrection' – as Trotsky colourfully puts it.⁸ In a strange way, the activists in this 'Social-Democratic' right wing were no different from comrade Lenin, having been drawn into the leadership work of the CC of our party and by now leading the party and the country, not as SDs but as Communists and as the best preservers of orthodox Leninist Bolshevism.

Would it in general be possible for some kind of rightist, SD, 'Hilferding' wing to form *and persist inside our party*?

That is absurd! Our party has been built not according to the formula advanced by comrade Trotsky in 1904–5 and which he wanted to realise in the era of the Reaction together with the liquidationists. According to the principles of Bolshevism, any kind of deviation that appears and takes shape is cut off from the party, for the party is an organisation with a united mind, a united will, and united action.

Comrade Trotsky is apparently still unable to grasp this, for last year during the discussion he proposed introducing the freedom to form groupings and factions, an idea which the party – as a Bolshevik party – rejected unanimously.

As proof of the existence not of accidental mistakes but of 'an entire right wing' in the party, comrade Trotsky accused this group of comrades of imagining some kind of 'combined form of state institutions'⁹ – in lieu of the Republic of Soviets.

Just how strained this 'accusation' is can be seen from the fact that in the pre-October period nobody could yet imagine all the details of the state organisational form of the future dictatorship of the proletariat.

It was about the *content* of the revolution – we had to *grope around for the forms* because this was after all the first such experience in world history, not counting the Paris Commune, which as we know did not manage to crystallise into finished, sharp *forms* of the workers' dictatorship. Before October, Lenin wrote the following about this: 'during the transition from the old to the new there may be temporary "combined types" (as *Rabochy Put* correctly pointed out a day or two ago¹⁰) – for instance, a Soviet Republic together with a Constituent Assembly' (Lenin, *Sobr. soch.*, v. XIV, part 2, pp. 167–8).¹¹

8 Though not direct quotations, the gist is in Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 121–123.

9 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 110.

10 Comrade Lenin is referring to an article by Comrade Zinoviev containing the resolution on the combined type of the state [original footnote].

11 Lenin 1964q, p. 172.

One more fact:

Already *after* the October overthrow, alongside the Leningrad Soviet, Military Revolutionary Committee, the CEC [TsIK], SNK [Sovnarkom] – the Leningrad City Duma was elected in Leningrad on the basis of universal, etc. voting rights, with comrade Mikhail Kalinin as the city chief.

This all shows that the proletariat was groping for the *forms* of state life not only before October but also for a period of time *after* the October overthrow; it is absurd to accuse comrades Zinoviev, Kamenev and others of Social Democracy solely on the basis that they thought *long-term* about the *possible* type of a combined state.

This proves that comrade Trotsky has rapidly descended from the heights of the 'objective' historian, a mission he took on himself, to the role of prosecutor-exposer.

But the greatest sin of comrade Trotsky's book is his distortion of Lenin's role and mutual relations with the party and the CC of the party.

What, in Trotsky's view, was comrade Lenin's mistake?

Comrade Trotsky accuses comrade Lenin of making three mistakes: (1) Lenin proposed organising the uprising behind the Soviets' back without taking into account the issue of 'Soviet legality';¹² (2) Lenin proposed launching the uprising in Moscow and not in Leningrad, which, in comrade Trotsky's words, 'monstrously overestimated' of the forces of the enemy and 'completely distorted' their size (p. XL),¹³ and finally (3) comrade Lenin, being isolated from real life while 'underground, [he was unable] to assess the radical shift not only in the mood but also in the organisational ties among the entire military rank-and-file and hierarchy after the "silent" insurrection of the capital's garrison in the middle of October' (p. XLIX)¹⁴ – and therefore he proposed organising the uprising before the appointed date of 25 October.

In addition to these accusations, Trotsky emphasises even more strongly both the 'enormous' differences between Lenin and the CC, and his (Trotsky's) own position in these clashes side-by-side with Lenin against the CC and especially against its 'SD' wing.

At some point, history will reveal to us all the details of the picture of the battles, differences and positions of the various groups of those days, but already today, on the basis of what we have at the present, it must be said that the picture of the situation of the CC, its mutual relations with Lenin, and

¹² Trotsky, Document 1, p. 105.

¹³ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 113.

¹⁴ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 122.

Lenin's precise role is distorted by comrade Trotsky; this picture is the result of a broad strategic manoeuvre that has been thought out in advance, a manoeuvre designed to regroup and consolidate the forces inside the RKP and the entire Communist International.

Let us look at how Lenin dealt with all this, and in particular the seminal question of the location and timing of the October insurrection.

Lenin, following Engels, regarded insurrection as an art, and consequently took into account *all* the conditions required for final victory.¹⁵

On 10 October the CC adopted the resolution on the insurrection, on 16 October the Military Revolutionary Committee was organised, and 25 October was declared *in advance* as the date of the insurrection.

This was far too careless and could have ruined the chance of success. It was necessary to lull the vigilance of the enemy, deceive him, by beginning the insurrection *before the officially declared date*.

But Lenin, flooding the CC with urgent letters about the need to begin the insurrection immediately and not wait for the officially declared date, assumed that things were clearer on the ground, and he did not formulate his proposal as a categorical order about the precise time and date of the insurrection.

In his well-known letter about the Aleksandrinka, arresting the Provisional Government, etc., Lenin wrote that 'of course, this is all by way of example, only to illustrate the fact that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to Marxism, to remain loyal to the revolution unless insurrection is treated as an art'.¹⁶

In another letter to the CC at this time, comrade Lenin wrote: 'We are concerned now not with the "*day*", or moment of insurrection in the narrow sense of the word. That will be only decided by the common voice *of those who are in contact with the workers and soldiers, with the masses* [...] The point is to make the task clear to the Party'.¹⁷

Comrade Lenin therefore articulated the question *in terms of principle*, gave a general directive that the class forces and the relationship among them had developed in such the way that they could not be held back, and that it

15 Engels 1967, p. 227.

16 Lenin 1964j, p. 27.

17 Lenin 1964w, p. 20 (Babakhan's emphasis). The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'The point is that now, at the Democratic Conference, our Party has virtually its own congress, and this congress (whether it wishes to or not) must decide the fate of the revolution'.

was necessary to prepare the armed insurrection, to articulate the question of the seizure of power in realistic terms, and not to be limited by phrases and resolutions.

In light of this, his urgent statements that the Congress of Soviets should not be *fetishised* become clear, for this might mean missing out on any beneficial conditions that were developing, and that the timing of the insurrection, 25 October, should not be fetishised, for the bourgeoisie, being forewarned, would move its forces up.

As far as Moscow is concerned, Il'ich put forward a plan to launch the uprising in Moscow, for at that time it became clear that the Provisional Government, being unable to 'rein in' the revolutionary proletariat and garrison of Leningrad, was already thinking of a way of surrendering Leningrad to the Germans who would be able to establish the 'order' and 'legality' that the bourgeoisie so needed.

Lenin's leadership was based on principle and general guidance, and on the realistic, concrete leadership of the insurrection by the CC and local party and worker masses – that is what we had in the October days.

Of course this picture is 'somewhat' different from the picture comrade Trotsky gives us.

In conclusion, two more points: first, on the idea that comrade Trotsky's line 'conform[ed] completely' and was even a 'foreshadowing' of the entire line of comrade Lenin, and secondly, on the 'silent' but victorious uprising of 10 October which according to comrade Trotsky on 9 October predetermined the victory of 25 October.¹⁸

Regarding the complete unanimity of comrade Lenin's and comrade Trotsky's line, the contemporary documents and eye-witness accounts say otherwise.

We already explained this partly in our analysis of Lenin's April Theses and partly in our investigation of his understanding of the February overthrow; we can add only that Trotsky's letters from America acquaint us with all of Trotsky's *new* mistakes with his permanent revolution, his failure to understand the stage through which the revolution was passing, his underestimation of the peasantry, etc.

In comrade Trotsky's opinion, the fact that the battalions of the Petrograd garrison were not moved to the front by order of the Soviet and in spite of the order of the Main Command Staff meant that the outcome of the insurrection of 25 October was already 'three-quarters settled, if not more': 'Lenin, who was

¹⁸ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 136, 96, 122.

not in Petrograd, did not appreciate the full significance of this fact' (p. XLIX), declares comrade Trotsky.¹⁹

And if we add to this that comrade Trotsky was head of the Leningrad Soviet which had carried out the 'silent' insurrection on 10 October that, on 9 October, had determined the fate of the '*merely supplementary*' insurrection of 25 October, then the whole 'design' is revealed – this strained construction of a system of two insurrections: a basic one – on 10 October, and another 'supplementary' one – one-tenth of it – on 25 October.

If we look at the facts of this period, we will see that the very system of 'dual power' in place at that time – both the Soviets (which became particularly strong after the Kornilov action) and the Provisional Government – demanded constant 'agreement', 'contact', discussion in the Soviet about every major measure and step by the organs of the Provisional Government and by the government itself.

Before this there were certainly 'instances' when orders from the Command Staff of the Petrograd Military District were not carried out, or when orders depended on agreement with the Executive Committee of the Soviet, or even when there were frictions when the Soviet was under the control of Mensheviks and SRs.

All this forced even the conciliationist Leningrad Soviet to appoint a special 'plenipotentiary' to supervise the actions of the Leningrad Military District – a commissar whose signature was needed for units of the garrisons to carry out the orders of the command staff.

These kinds of situations became the norm in the Kerensky era.

Of course, open insubordination of the garrison to the command staff was significant; but alongside the organisation of the Military Revolutionary Committee (which was after all an open declaration of war!), the appointment of our own commissars to garrison units, the transfer long before this of the Leningrad Soviet into the hands of the Bolsheviks, and the events of 10 October, etc. were all *individual links* in a general chain of events which prepared the victory of 25 October 1917.

Moving the date of the October overthrow from 25 October to 10 October is not objectively justified, but subjectively it is an 'individual' tactic that comrade Trotsky needed for his general strategic manoeuvre.

This fact, like all the facts we have touched on here (unfortunately only very fleetingly and far from comprehensively) in our analysis of 'The Lessons of October', brings us back to the statement made at the outset of this report,

19 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 122.

namely that 'The Lessons of October' is not objective history but has a 'very different' intention. Comrade Sokol'nikov is right when he says that we are dealing here with a 'spiteful unmasker'; with a prosecutor who has set himself the task of besmirching the leading group of Lenin's disciples.²⁰

Under this banner, the struggle is not only against individuals, but against the foundations of Leninism.

Insofar as this manoeuvre is caught in time and explained to the masses, the party is not concerned about the question of the purity and preservation of those great maxims bequeathed to us by the brilliant author of the proletarian revolution, comrade Lenin.

20 Sokol'nikov, Document 6, p. 182.

‘Trotskyism or Leninism? Report by Comrade L.B. Kamenev’¹

L. Kamenev

Comrades! The subject of my speech will be comrade Trotsky’s most recent publication which he put out on the eve of the anniversary of the October Revolution, and called by the author ‘The Lessons of October’. Trotsky makes a gift of his booklets to the party quite often. Up to now, however, we have not found it necessary to pay particular attention to these booklets, even though in many of them it is quite easy to detect retreats from Bolshevism, from the official ideology of our party. But this booklet must be given special attention and analysed thoroughly because comrade Trotsky has chosen the lessons of October as the subject of his recent publication.

As our entire party, the entire Comintern, the entire world labour movement, and the entire working youth are learning and will keep learning the lessons of the October Revolution, interpreting these lessons cannot be considered the private matter of this or that author. As ‘The Lessons of October’ is appearing under the auspices of the party, and as it has been written by a member of the CC and Politburo of our party, which, and this is no secret to anyone, is a leader of the Comintern, then clearly there is the danger that these kinds of pronouncements, these kinds of ‘lessons’, might be accepted as a manual not only by the members of our party and by our younger members, but also by the entire Comintern. And, by its form, comrade Trotsky’s work is clearly designed to serve as a manual for the Comintern. Everyone who has read this article can see that it is addressed not only to our party, but to the international proletariat as well, and to the Communist parties of all countries. This is why I said that this is not a private matter, and the conflict over the interpretation, correct or otherwise, of ‘The Lessons of October’ is not a literary conflict, not merely the

1 This is a stylistic reworking of the report I delivered on 18 November at a meeting of the MK with active party members, and repeated on 19 November at a meeting of the fraction of the VTsSPS [All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. F.C.], and on 21 November at a conference of military party workers [original footnote]. [Kamenev, ‘Leninizm ili trotskizm? Doklad tov. L.B. Kameneva’, *Pravda*, no. 269, 26 November 1924, pp. 3–5; published simultaneously in *Izvestiia*, no. 270, 26 November 1924, pp. 3–5. Kamenev delivered it a third time to a meeting of military party officials on 21 November].

business of literary people: it is a political conflict, it is the business of the whole party. Should any comrades maintain that the conflict sparked by comrade Trotsky's booklet is just a conflict between Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev, Stalin and Kamenev, that it is a conflict among a few literati, then this would show that those comrades do not understand the real interests of the party. Such views can come only from those comrades who would like to use the conflict inside the party to create some kind of a third group, based on the idea that 'the literati are quarrelling, but this does not concern us'.

No, the conflict over the lessons of October, the conflict over what the international proletariat should take from the October Revolution, is not just a matter for the literati, but for all the party masses.

No one has the right to stand on the sidelines in this conflict. This is the most profound question of our internal life and of the life of the Comintern. Can the party recommend learning from Trotsky, or should it, with all its authority, warn the proletariat against the conclusions comrade Trotsky is drawing in his 'The Lessons of October'? That is the question.

I do not intend to go into a very detailed analysis of comrade Trotsky's article here. Comrade Trotsky is a skilful writer, and his gifted pen has served the party repeatedly. But here it is serving elements that are hostile to the party, here it does not serve Bolshevism but rather the business of tearing down and discrediting Bolshevism both as the ideology of the proletarian revolution and as the organisation of the fighting elements of the proletariat. And this is achieved by means of an extremely skilful, but deeply incorrect, depiction of all of the events from February to October. I have no doubt that the party will call on a number of authors, participants in these events, actual warriors from those days, to identify and analyse comrade Trotsky's various distortions of all the decisive moments of party history in that era: the April demonstration is distorted, the April Party Conference is distorted, the events of June and July are distorted, the events surrounding the activity of the Pre-parliament are distorted, even the course of events in October itself is distorted. I cannot dwell here on the details that are necessary to restore historical truth or to compare comrade Trotsky's assertions against the documentary evidence. I only want to address the general question of the social and political significance of comrade Trotsky's pronouncements, the meaning of this publication in light of all of comrade Trotsky's statements, and the role of comrade Trotsky in our party.

For obvious reasons we have avoided addressing this issue, but we can avoid it no longer because comrade Trotsky, having raised the question of October and the question of the role played by our party and by Lenin in the creation of the ideology of the October overthrow, is forcing us to deal on a broad front with all of his pronouncements over the course of the history of the Bolshevik Party.

I will have to deal therefore with the issue of Trotskyism and Bolshevism in general, taking this most recent statement of comrade Trotsky's views as but one of the clearest and most instructive examples of comrade Trotsky's general political line.

Above all, we must ask ourselves whether a general political line actually exists? What do we mean by the term Trotskyism? Does this refer to comrade Trotsky's personality, or to general, impersonal phenomena in the history of the labour movement over the past twenty years in Russia? What are we dealing with here – with a personality, with individualism, or with some generalised phenomenon, some trend caused by the general conditions of development of the labour movement in a petty-bourgeois country? Are we dealing with an accidental phenomenon or with a phenomenon with a history behind it, which we must not forget? If you turn to comrade Lenin's works for an answer to this question, you will find that hardly a single work by comrade Lenin, up to the time of the February Revolution and again – after a brief interruption – from 1918, failed to address repeatedly and discuss systematically the question of Trotskyism. Why?

1 Trotskyism and the Party before the Revolution of 1917

Our party was formed in a petty-bourgeois, capitalistically backward country. Our proletariat existed in the most backward conditions in the European countries and was surrounded by peasant petty-bourgeois elements to a greater degree than the proletariat of any other country. The question, then, of how this proletariat, under the conditions of tsarist autocracy, could create and forge a party which the fates of history destined to place at the head of the entire international movement, is a basic question about the *party's self-recognition*. It is about our origins and development, and the party itself has often asked why and how the proletariat of Russia (to use the old term) in a backward peasant country and under an autocratic regime was destined to forge that Leninism, which is today the guiding light for the entire international proletariat, for the proletariat of countries which are far more advanced in capitalist development and economic preparation than Russia. One thing is certain. Under these conditions, the party of the revolutionary proletariat, the party of the Bolsheviks, was able to develop only in constant, systematic, ceaseless struggle against the petty-bourgeois element, which was striving to subordinate the working class to itself. Bolshevism is at its core a fighting doctrine, in the sense that it was created, developed, and became stronger in a constant and ceaseless struggle with all forms of bourgeois influence on the proletariat.

The most concentrated expression of the policy of bourgeois influence on the proletariat is Menshevism. The thirty-year history of Bolshevism is the thirty-year history of its struggle against Menshevism. Leninism is the credo of the proletariat's war against the bourgeoisie. Precisely for this reason, Leninism is at the same time the credo of the war against Menshevism.

The kinds of influence exerted by the bourgeoisie over the proletariat have changed as historical eras have changed. The forms, features, varieties, and methods of Menshevism have changed accordingly. What has not changed is the 'ferocious' Leninist struggle against Menshevism, Lenin's ability to discern the true essence of Menshevism despite all its changes in form, and the hostility of Menshevism towards Bolshevik ideology and the building of the Bolshevik Party. Everyone knows this, or rather everyone should know this. Everyone understands that whoever has not grasped the idea that Bolshevism is a systematic struggle against Menshevism has understood nothing of Bolshevism, understood nothing of its history, of its historical moment, or why Bolshevism has been victorious. By no means everyone knows, even though it was assumed until recently that everyone should know, that just as Leninism emerged, grew and triumphed in a constant, systematic struggle against Menshevism, it also emerged, grew and triumphed in a constant, systematic struggle against Trotskyism.

Why?

Because throughout the period when our party was preparing for the decisive, class struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie, by making Lenin the source of the credo of the proletarian revolution, and by forging the party as its leader, Trotskyism served as nothing more than an agent of Menshevism, as a cover for Menshevism, as a mask for Menshevism.

Beginning in 1903, i.e. the moment of the birth of Menshevism, and until its final collapse in 1917, Trotsky acted as the agent of Menshevism within the working class. This is a fact, and without grasping this fact, it is impossible to understand the role attributed to Trotsky in all of Lenin's works over the past twenty years.

Whoever studies the history of the party in Lenin's works – and we do not have, nor will we ever have, a better, more profound textbook on the history of the party and the revolution, or one richer in substance and conclusions – will inevitably be convinced that throughout the entire struggle for the party and for the revolution against the Mensheviks, Lenin regarded Trotsky (both his general political line over decades and his individual actions) exclusively as an agent of Menshevism, as a weapon used by Menshevism to gain influence in one or another stratum of the working class, as a servant of Menshevism. For Lenin, Trotsky, 'Trotskyism', was a characteristic, not an accidental, phe-

nomenon, caused by the pressure of the bourgeoisie, and was but part of the sum total of phenomena that were hostile to the genuine proletarian party, including a long line of other groups and groupings, factions and sub-factions, tendencies and semi-tendencies, which the working class had to battle in order to create its own proletarian party.

For Lenin, Trotsky was not interesting as an individual after 1903: for Lenin and for the party, he was the typical embodiment of one of the historical currents which were hostile to the creation of the Bolshevik Party and of Bolshevik ideology, i.e. the ideology of the proletarian revolution and the Bolshevik proletarian organisation. Lenin regarded Trotsky as the living embodiment, at times talented, at times trivial and unnecessarily verbose, of an element that was hostile to the cause of the proletariat. He regarded Trotsky, like Martov, Chernov, and Axelrod, simply as the embodiment of certain social phenomena, and not at all as a personality. This systematic struggle against Trotskyism, as a tendency hostile to Bolshevism, can be found throughout all the volumes of Lenin's works up to the moment when Trotsky joined our party. Then a pause followed, followed by a return to this same struggle – but in a different form.

In the Days of the First Revolution

Until the Second Congress of the party in 1903, until the split between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, comrade Trotsky worked for Lenin's *Iskra*, as did Martov, [Aleksandr] Potresov and other Mensheviks. For his zeal in carrying out Lenin's plans at the first meetings of the congress, comrade Trotsky even earned the nickname 'Lenin's cudgel'.² What an honourable role! But comrade Trotsky's political history is characterised less by this role than by the fact that he immediately betrayed it as soon as the Mensheviks appeared on the scene at the later meetings of that congress.

The organisational split at the congress between the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks happened over the question of elections to the Central Committee of the party.

Three members had to be elected. The Mensheviks and Bolsheviks were able to agree on two of these three members. For the third member, the Mensheviks wanted ... 'Lenin's cudgel' from yesterday – Trotsky. Lenin would not agree to this at any price. The Mensheviks would not give in at any price. Apparently both Lenin and Martov had a good idea just how much this 'cudgel' was in reality 'Lenin's'. Lenin had a majority at the congress. Trotsky was not elected to the cc. Comrade Trotsky, together with Martov, Dan, Axelrod and others, then

² Lenin 1964y, pp. 346–7.

created the Menshevik faction, violated the resolution of the congress, spear-headed the boycott of the central organs of the party led by Lenin, and wrote a political pamphlet against Lenin – one of the most pretentious and disgusting in the Menshevik literature, in which Lenin's entire policy is explained as a thirst for power in the party by a 'candidate for the position of dictator' (i.e. Lenin).³ The whole band of Mensheviks, headed by Martov, Dan and others, recommended this pamphlet by comrade Trotsky for broad publication.⁴ This was the beginning of the history of Menshevism and of the history of comrade Trotsky in the party.

Having become the sword-bearer for Martov and Axelrod, comrade Trotsky lost any interest at all as a political figure in Lenin's eyes. Lenin argued long and systematically with the Mensheviks, with Plekhanov, Axelrod, Martov, Martynov, explaining and exposing their views, but considered it pointless to waste time arguing with their collaborator [*sotrudnik*], Trotsky. 'We must engage in polemics with Plekhanov, we must engage in polemics with Martov, and we can argue with the extreme opportunist Martynov, but it is not worth wasting time arguing with Trotsky', Lenin suggested to his collaborators.

But when in the summer of 1905 comrade Trotsky tried to extricate himself from the Menshevik void by expressing in his own words Parvus's idea of the 'permanent revolution', Lenin engaged in a detailed analysis of the ideas and slogans of Parvus, and rejected them. In reference to Trotsky's pamphlet, he expressed his regret that the 'revolutionary Social Democrat' Parvus found it possible to agree 'with Trotsky' and his 'revolutionary phrases'. Lenin did not consider it necessary to say one more word about comrade Trotsky and his 'original' theory (Lenin, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 7, p. 130).⁵ By the way, comrade Trotsky is now trying to present precisely this pamphlet to the party as the credential of his revolutionary past, and is trying to show that Lenin was correct only insofar as he agreed with the viewpoint expressed in comrade Trotsky's pamphlet. More about this later.

Throughout the first revolution, in the years when the worker masses had the first opportunity to put the various theories of the Russian Revolution and their tactical methods to a practical test, and when Lenin bitterly defended the Bolshevik plan of revolution, he did not once deem it necessary to add anything to his characterisation of Trotsky's principles, or to the term 'revolutionary

3 Trotsky 1980b, p. 103.

4 For more on this, see the pamphlet by comrade Kanatchikov, *History of a Deviation*, which offers a detailed and useful exposition of comrade Trotsky's pronouncements [original footnote]. [Kanatchikov 1924].

5 Lenin 1965c, pp. 289–90.

phrases'. Lenin knew that Trotsky's 'leftist phrasings' about the 'permanent revolution', firstly, would not affect the actual course of the revolution and the workers' movement, and secondly, would not stop comrade Trotsky from remaining in the Menshevik organisation, working in the Menshevik central organ, and collaborating with the Mensheviks politically. Lenin had the Marxist habit of judging people, parties, and trends by their deeds, not by their words.

Throughout the era of the first revolution (1905–7), when the proletariat had its first opportunity to take the stage as a mass force and to demonstrate by its actions its class politics and its attitude to other classes, a bitter struggle took place between just two tactics, between just two political trends, between just two blueprints for the Russian Revolution: these were Menshevism which underestimated or disregarded the peasantry and drew the working class into an accommodation with the bourgeoisie; and Bolshevism which urged the peasantry, in the name of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, to support the workers in their struggle against both tsarism and the bourgeoisie. This struggle between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks in the first revolution over the direction of the revolution – like the entire first revolution – basically anticipated the struggle that ultimately played out in the second revolution, the revolution of 1917. As in this latter revolution, the Parvus-Trotsky theory played no role whatsoever in the course of the first revolution: it remained an empty phrase – as Lenin had predicted – a phrase that had no impact on the actual course of the class struggle, and that has not been preserved in the living events of the actual struggle but only in the dusty pages of old Menshevik newspapers. That is why Lenin did not waste a single word refuting this theory in the course of the revolution.

In the Days of the Counter-Revolution

The revolutionary wave ebbed. The party reorganised itself for the long and difficult work in an atmosphere of counter-revolution. The 'leftist phrasings' lost all their effect. It was necessary to lay the foundations of new tactics, it was necessary to save whatever could still be saved from the counter-revolutionary pogrom in this atmosphere of exhaustion of the working class, of destruction of proletarian organisations, of the outburst of apostasy [*renegatstvo*], and of the treachery and Schadenfreude over the crushed revolution – it was necessary to save the banner of revolutionary politics of the proletariat and the principles of its illegal organisations. It was necessary to defend the banner of revolutionary politics of the working class that the Mensheviks had started to mock and trample in the dirt. This moment was the most difficult moment for the Bolshevik party, because the whole atmosphere of the failure of the revolution was directed against the Bolsheviks, while the Menshevik, liquidationist

tendencies – liquidationist with regard to the party and the revolution – were supported very broadly. Yet it was at this moment that comrade Trotsky, who had wanted with Parvus to be ‘more revolutionary than everyone else’ when the revolution was on the rise, should have come to the Bolsheviks’ aid. This, at least, was what Plekhanov, our principled opponent in 1905–7, did: the old revolutionary could not hold himself back, and, faced with the general wave of apostasy, he rushed into battle alongside the Bolsheviks under the banner ‘General Demarcation’, i.e. a general demarcation of proletarian revolutionaries from Menshevik Liquidators.⁶ Trotsky acted to the contrary.

Comrade Trotsky’s first speech as the counter-revolution was beginning was at the London Congress. At this congress, the Bolsheviks were fighting against the Menshevik Liquidators, especially against the fraction of the Second Duma, led by the politicians Tsereteli and Dan who are so well-known to us today. The Bolsheviks criticised this Duma fraction because, by representing what in fact were Menshevik views, it tried to take the path of West-European Social-Democratic parliamentarianism. We are well aware that this is a greenhouse for the cultivation of the most poisonous fruits of treachery against the working class. The Bolsheviks were sharply critical of the very first steps taken along this path.

Of course, Comrade Trotsky defended the Menshevik faction against the Bolshevik attacks. Lenin characterised his position in this way:

He [Trotsky] spoke on behalf of the Centre, and expressed the views of the Bund. (The Bund is the most opportunistic organisation that has ever existed in the party, the most unprincipled; its lack of principle is every more characteristic than its opportunism: it was an organisation of artisans [*remeslenniki*], and reflected their unproletarian spirit). He fulminated against us for introducing our ‘unacceptable’ resolution. He threatened an outright split ... Is it not monstrous[??] ... The very possibility that the question can be presented in this way shows that there is something non-partisan in our Party ... That is a position based not on principle, but on the Centre’s lack of principle⁷ and, of course, of its leader, Trotsky.⁸

Later, comrade Lenin found far more expressive words to characterise comrade Trotsky’s position when our party summed up the experience of 1905 and, on

6 It is true that Plekhanov’s passion for the fight did not last long [original footnote].

7 Lenin 1962b, pp. 451–2.

8 Lenin, *Sochinenii*, v. VIII, pp. 387–8 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1962b, p. 451].

the basis of this, laid the foundation for the entire future of the party. But Lenin's words had already anticipated the whole role comrade Trotsky was destined to play in our party over the next decade.

This was comrade Trotsky's first act after the revolution of 1905. From this moment until 1917, comrade Trotsky acted incessantly as the defender of the Mensheviks against the Bolsheviks, as the adversary of the Bolshevik Party which was steeling itself in battle, and he was invariably regarded as such by the party.

Let's follow Lenin, and see how he characterised comrade Trotsky's role in the difficult process of creating the Bolshevik Party, i.e. in the process of creating both the theory and the organisation for the leadership of the proletarian revolution.

1910. May. This was the moment of the *formal separation* of the Bolsheviks, the final ideological and organisational demarcation of the Bolsheviks from the purveyors of bourgeois influence on the proletariat: from the Menshevik Liquidators, led by Axelrod and Martov, and from the recallists, led by the well-known, later renegade [Grigorii] Aleksinskii. Lenin wrote (*Sobr. Sochin.*, vol. XI, part 2, pp. 49–53):

The representatives of two extreme tendencies, each of them equally expressing subordination to bourgeois ideas, each of them equally anti-Party, are entirely at one in their internal Party policy, in their struggle against the Bolsheviks ... Trotsky's resolution only differs outwardly from the 'effusions' of Axelrod and Alexinsky. It is drafted very 'cautiously' and lays claim to 'above faction' fairness. But what is its meaning? The 'Bolshevik leaders' are to blame for everything – this is the same 'philosophy of history' as that of Axelrod and Alexinsky ...

This question needs only to be put for one to see how hollow are the eloquent phrases in Trotsky's resolution, to see how in reality they serve to defend the very position held by Axelrod and Co., and Alexinsky and Co. [...] It is in this that the enormous difference lies between real partyism, which consists in purging the Party of liquidationism and otzovism, and the conciliation of Trotsky and Co., which actually renders the most faithful service to the liquidators and otzovists, and is therefore an evil that is all the more dangerous to the Party the more cunningly, artfully and rhetorically it cloaks itself with professedly pro-Party, professedly anti-factional declamations.⁹

9 Lenin 1963c, p. 211.

The bitter struggle for the principles of Bolshevism continued. All the enemies of the Bolsheviks came together and as a united front attacked the Bolsheviks, the party, and its central institutions. Lenin returned to the question of the significance of this struggle and Trotsky's role and wrote (at the end of 1910, *Sobr. soch.*, v. XI, part 2, pp. 182–3, 187):

Martov's article and Trotsky's resolution conceal definite practical actions, actions directed against the Party. Martov's article is simply the literary expression of a campaign launched by the *Golos* group (Mensheviks) to sabotage the Central Committee of our Party. Trotsky's resolution [...] expresses the very aim of the *Golos* group (Mensheviks): to destroy the central institutions (of the Bolsheviks) so detested by the liquidators, and with them the Party as an organisation as well. It is not enough to lay bare the anti-Party activities of the *Golos* group and Trotsky, they must be fought.¹⁰

As you can see, comrades, many things have happened in our party, and much that seems new to the young members of the party is by no means so new to us, the older ones, or to the careful younger readers of Lenin's works. You can never tell!

Lenin goes on:

Therefore, we declare, *in the name of the Party as a whole*, that Trotsky is pursuing an anti-Party policy; that he is contravening Party legality and is embarking on the path of *adventurism* and a *split* ... Trotsky maintains silence on this undeniable truth (about anti-Party groups), because the truth is detrimental to the real aims of his policy ... These real aims are an *anti-Party bloc*, which Trotsky supports and is organising ... Naturally, this bloc will support Trotsky [...], for (anti-party elements) are getting what they want, namely, freedom for their factions, blessings for them, a cover for their activity, and a legal defence of that activity before the workers. Therefore, it is from the standpoint of 'fundamental principles' that we must regard this bloc as adventurism in the most literal meaning of the term. Trotsky does not dare to say that he sees in Potresov and in the otzovists, real Marxists, real champions of the principles of Social Demo-

10 The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'which calls upon organisations in the localities to prepare for a "general Party conference" independent of, and against, the Central Committee' (Lenin 1963d, p. 23).

cracy. The essence of the position of an adventurer is that he must forever resort to evasions ... Trotsky's bloc with Potresov and the Vperedists is just such an adventure, judged from the viewpoint of 'basic principles'. This is no less true from the viewpoint of party political tasks ... The experience of the year has shown in practice that it is precisely the Potresov group and the *Vperyod* fraction that are the embodiment of this bourgeois influence upon the proletariat ... Thirdly and lastly, Trotsky's policy is adventurism in the *organisational* sense.¹¹

1911. The struggle for the Party and its ideas continued. Trotsky continued his anti-Party policy. Lenin continued his characterisation of it. In June 1911, Lenin wrote (*Sobr. soch.*, v. XI, part 2, p. 322):

'The Bolsheviks must now close their ranks more firmly, strengthen their group, define more clearly and precisely its Party line [...], rally the scattered forces, and go into battle for an R.S.D.L.P. Party purged of those who spread bourgeois influence among the proletariat'. And he added:

'People like Trotsky, with his inflated phrases about the R.S.D.L.P. and his toadying to the liquidators, who have nothing in common with the R.S.D.L.P., today represent "the prevalent disease". Actually they preach *surrender* to the liquidators who are building a Stolypin labour party'.¹²

After several months, Lenin wrote a special memorandum 'To All Party Organisations, Groups and Circles':

'Let us merely mention one most general feature of the pronouncements of Trotsky's little group: in the realm of tactical issues and of disagreements over principles, Trotsky can find in his arsenal weapons for the struggle only with the left wing of the party. It goes without saying that such a policy is grist to the mill only of the *Golos* group (Mensheviks) and opportunists of all stripes' (*Sobr. soch. Lenina*, v. XI, part 2, pp. 335–8).¹³

Trotsky continued his policy, and Lenin continued his characterisation:

They use phrase-mongering to shield the real liquidators and do everything to hamper the work of the anti-liquidators, i.e. the Bolsheviks ...

11 The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'and the anti-Party conference which he is convening, for here the Potresovs and the *Vperyod* group' (Lenin 1963d, pp. 31–7).

12 The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: '(as distinct from the line of the groups which, in one way or another, conceal their "identity")' (Lenin 1963e, p. 216).

13 Lenin 1924, p. 338. I have been unable to locate this article in Lenin's *Collected Works*.

Trotsky and the Trotskyites and conciliators like him are more pernicious than any liquidator; the *convinced liquidators state their views bluntly, and it is easy for the workers to detect where they are wrong, whereas the Trotskys deceive the workers, cover up the evil, and make it impossible to expose the evil and to remedy it*. Whoever supports Trotsky's group supports a policy of lying and of deceiving the workers, a policy of shielding the liquidators. Full freedom of action for Mr. Potresov and Co. in Russia, and *the shielding of their deeds by 'revolutionary' phrase-mongering* abroad – there you have the essence of the policy of 'Trotskyism'.

Sobr. soch. Lenina, v. XI, part 2, pp. 359–60¹⁴

This characteristic, the disguising of rightist actions with leftist, pseudo-revolutionary phrases, was for Lenin the distinguishing feature of Trotskyism, and it was repeated year after year on every issue, at every juncture. And Lenin never tired of emphasising and stressing to the party that this feature was the most fundamental and characteristic feature of Trotskyism, and the most dangerous for the party and the workers' movement. Several months after writing the aforementioned characterisation, Lenin wrote of Trotsky:

'The poor hero of phrase-mongering failed to notice a mere bagatelle: only that S.-D. (in today's terminology, Communist) is revolutionary who understands how harmful anti-revolutionary pseudo-Social Democracy can be in a given country at a given time, i.e., the harm of liquidationism and otzovism in the Russia of the 1908–11 period, and who *knows* how to fight against such non-S.-D. tendencies'.¹⁵

And a few months later (December 1911):

Trotsky calls himself a Party man on the strength of the fact that to him the Russian Party centre, formed by the overwhelming majority of the Social-Democratic organisations in Russia, means nothing ... This revolutionary phraseology merely serves to disguise and justify the falsity of liquidationism, and thereby to befuddle the minds of the workers ... Trotsky's particular task is to conceal liquidationism by throwing dust in the eyes of the workers ... It is impossible to argue with Trotsky on the merits of the issue, because Trotsky holds no views whatever. We can and should argue with confirmed liquidators and otzovists; but it is no use arguing with a man whose game is to hide the errors of both these

14 Lenin 1963a, p. 243.

15 Lenin 1963f, p. 270.

trends; in his case the thing to do is to expose him as a diplomat of the smallest calibre.

Sobr. soch. Lenina, v. XI, part 2, pp. 446–8¹⁶

It is not difficult to predict that there will be people who, on the basis of the party's historical documents cited here, will try to offer the most facile and completely philistine explanation: irritation, the rough-and-tumble of battle, accidental clashes. I therefore consider it my less-than-pleasant duty – since comrade Trotsky has now forced the party to deal with the history of the relations between Bolshevism and Trotskyism – to chart Lenin's pronouncements and Lenin's characterisation of the relations between the party and Trotskyism, not just for a particular year or for a particular question, but systematically throughout the 15 years since the party came to know Trotskyism. If a particular attitude has existed in our party towards Trotskyism not just for a particular occasion or on a particular question but systematically over many years and at every juncture of party history, then even the most intellectually lazy and philistine person cannot explain this away with references to irritation, coincidence, passion or something similar. Even the laziest person will have to recognise this: if, for 15 years, Lenin taught the party about Trotskyism day in, day out, if his characterisation turned out to be correct at every juncture of history, – whenever the revolutionary tide was rising, falling precipitously, and then rising again – then it is not a matter of irritation, not a matter of individual tastes, it is rather that Trotskyism is obviously the kind of trend which arises systematically, and that the foundations of Bolshevism, as the theory and practice of the proletarian Communist revolution, can be laid only in a systematic struggle against this trend.

Comrade Trotsky did not confine himself to preaching those views, which I have used Lenin's words to characterise here, only to the Russian workers. The situation of the Bolsheviks in the Second International is well-known. At that time the Bolsheviks in general, and Lenin in particular, were already viewed as odious figures by the leaders of the Second International. At that time, they already felt that the Bolsheviks, and especially Lenin, represented a new kind of force that was destined to supplant them, and so they willingly made the press of the Second International available to every kind of slander against the Bolsheviks and Bolshevism. At the same time, Lenin, throughout his emigration, throughout the revolution and counter-revolution, was never once afforded the possibility of addressing the German, French or Austrian

16 Lenin 1963g, pp. 360 ff.

workers from the tribune of the press organs of the Second International and telling them the truth about Bolshevism. In fact, the Second International kept us under a boycott, and yet gladly gave space to all of Lenin's opponents – Martov, Dan, and Trotsky, who were able to spread with impunity any lie and slander about the Bolsheviks to the international proletariat for they knew in advance that Lenin would not be permitted to respond. Trotsky took advantage of this opportunity to lay out before the international workers' movement the following crude 'philosophy' of Bolshevism: 'The Leninists were a clique of intellectuals who, under the leadership of Lenin, a person who would not shrink from any methods, had, by nefarious means, taken hold of the Russian proletarian movement, which only believed the Bolsheviks because of its ignorance and backwardness. The most important task then was to free the proletariat of Russia from the sway of this clique and its leader – Lenin'.¹⁷ This was the representation of Bolshevism which comrade Trotsky imposed on the International.

This was how he interpreted for the socialist workers of Europe the historical significance of the intraparty struggle in Russia and the significance of the Bolshevik struggle against the Mensheviks. Referring to the articles on this subject sent by Martov and Trotsky to the International, Lenin wrote in 1911:

Martov expounds Menshevik views. Trotsky follows in the wake of the Mensheviks, taking cover behind particularly sonorous phrases. Martov sums up the 'Russian experience' by saying: 'Blanquist and anarchist lack of culture triumphed over Marxist culture' (read: Bolshevism over Menshevism). 'Russian Social-Democracy spoke too zealously in Russian' (i.e. revolutionary, L.K.), in contrast to the '*general European*' (i.e. parliamentary, L.K.) methods of tactics. Trotsky's 'philosophy of history' is the same. [...] 'Sectarianism, intellectualist individualism, ideological fetishism' are placed in the forefront. '*The struggle for influence over the politically immature proletariat*' – that is the essence of the matter.¹⁸

After describing the views Trotsky presented to the German workers, Lenin wrote:

17 I have been unable to locate the source of this quotation, although much of the sentiment was contained in his letter to Chkheidze in 1913 (see Document 14, pp. 421–23).

18 Lenin 1963h, p. 374. In this article, Lenin refers to two earlier published pieces: L. Trotsky, 'Die Entwicklungstendenzen der russischen Sozialdemokratie', *Die Neue Zeit*, 28, no. 50, 1910, pp. 860–71; J. Martov, 'Preussische Diskussion und Russische Erfahrung', *Die Neue Zeit*, 28, no. 51, 1910, pp. 907–19.

The theory that the struggle between Bolshevism and Menshevism is a struggle for influence over an immature proletariat is not a new one. We have been encountering it since 1905 (if not since 1903) in innumerable books, pamphlets, and articles in the *liberal press*. Martov and Trotsky are putting before the German comrades *liberal views* with a Marxist coating ...

Trotsky declares: 'It is an illusion' to imagine that Menshevism and Bolshevism 'have struck deep roots in the depths of the proletariat'. This is a specimen of the resonant but empty phrases of which our Trotsky is a master. The *roots* of the divergence between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks lie, not in the 'depths' of the proletariat, but in the *economic content* of the Russian revolution. By ignoring this content, Martov and Trotsky have deprived themselves of the possibility of understanding the historical meaning of the inner Party struggle in Russia ... To speak of the struggle of trends in the Russian revolutions distributing labels such as 'sectarianism', 'lack of culture', etc., (the terms used by Trotsky against the Bolsheviks to scare the German philistines, L.K.) and not to say a word about the fundamental economic interests of the proletariat, of the liberal bourgeoisie and of the democratic peasantry, means stooping to the level of cheap journalists.¹⁹

Comrade Lenin explained to comrade Trotsky:

Martov is advocating the education of the peasants (who fought the nobility in revolutionary fashion) by the liberals (who betrayed the peasants to the nobles). This is substituting liberalism for Marxism. This is liberalism embellished with Marxist phrases ... The struggle between Bolshevism and Menshevism is inseparably bound up with that history, being a struggle over the question whether to support the liberals (on the part of the Mensheviks), or to overthrow the hegemony of the liberals over the peasantry (on the part of the Bolsheviks). Therefore, to attribute our splits to the influence of the intelligentsia, to the immaturity of the proletariat, etc, is a childishly naïve repetition of *liberal fairy-tales*.²⁰

19 Lenin 1963h, p. 375.

20 Lenin 1963h, p. 378.

As we see, Trotsky 'came to Lenin', while telling the international proletariat liberal fairy-tales about Leninism! ...

'A wide gulf separates our view from Martov's and, in spite of Trotsky's assertions, this gulf between the views of "intellectuals" reflects only the gulf which in fact existed at the end of 1905 between the classes, namely, between the revolutionary proletariat, which fought, and the bourgeoisie, which behaved in a treacherous manner'.²¹

This is what Trotsky did not grasp about Bolshevism, in Lenin's view. Did he grasp anything about it at all?

'Trotsky distorts Bolshevism, because he has never been able to form any definite views on the role of the proletariat in the Russian bourgeois revolution'.²²

Comrade Lenin, after characterising comrade Trotsky's entire representation of Bolshevism before the uninformed German workers as a 'refined treachery', concluded his characterisation with the following words:

In 1903 Trotsky was a Menshevik; he abandoned Menshevism in 1904, returned to the Mensheviks in 1905 and merely flaunted ultra-revolutionary phrases; in 1906 he left them again; at the end of 1906 he advocated electoral agreements with the Cadets (i.e., he was in fact once more with the Mensheviks); and in the spring of 1907, at the London Congress, he said that he differed from Rosa Luxemburg on 'individual shades of ideas rather than on political tendencies'. One day Trotsky plagiarises from the ideological stock-in-trade of one faction; the next day he plagiarises from that of another, and therefore declares himself to be standing *above* both factions. In theory Trotsky is on *no* point in agreement with either the liquidators or the otzovists, but *in actual practice he is in entire* agreement with both the Golosists and the Vperedists (i.e. with the supporters of bourgeois influence over the proletariat, L.K.) [...] I am obliged to declare that Trotsky represents only his own faction and enjoys a certain amount of confidence *exclusively* among the otzovists and the liquidators.

Sobr. soch., v. XI, part 2, pp. 292, 293, 296, 307–8²³

1912. This was a year of great change. In January, the Bolsheviks severed once and for all the remaining organisational links with the Mensheviks and, at their

²¹ Lenin 1963h, p. 385.

²² Lenin 1963h, p. 380.

²³ The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'Therefore, when Trotsky tells the German comrades that he represents the "general Party tendency" ...' (Lenin 1963h, p. 391).

own Bolshevik conference (in Prague), they set up their own purely Bolshevik CC, expelled the liquidators from the party, and proclaimed a revolutionary programme of action. In April, after the Lena shootings, the proletarian movement rose up again, for the first time since 1905, in a stormy wave. It adopted in toto the programme and tactics of the Bolsheviks. The 'Bolshevik epidemic', to use the malicious term coined by the Mensheviks at the time, began to spread and quickly won out among the worker masses. The awakened labour movement systematically 'removed from their posts' all those liquidators who had managed to seize these posts in the gloom of the preceding counter-revolutionary years. This was the start of the revolutionary campaign under the slogans of the Bolsheviks, under the leadership of the Bolsheviks, a campaign which by mid-1914 had already led to fighting on the barricades in Leningrad.

What was comrade Trotsky's position in the face of these crucial events? Maybe this wave of revolutionary enthusiasm, this new growth in the labour movement, would persuade comrade Trotsky to abandon the role as an agent of Menshevism he had played during the preceding years of decline and decay? Maybe his ultra-leftist theory of 'permanent revolution', which had lain untouched for years, would now help him to cut the cord tying him to counter-revolutionary Menshevism?

No! Comrade Trotsky remained true to himself and ... to the Menshevik Liquidators.

He responded to the organisational development and consolidation of the Bolshevik Party (the January Conference of the Bolsheviks) by strengthening his alliance with the Mensheviks in their struggle against Bolshevism. His efforts created the so-called August Bloc, a bloc, an alliance, the organised unification of all non-Bolshevik and anti-Bolshevik groups and sub-groups. This bloc, wrote Lenin, 'was based on an unprincipled approach, on hypocrisy and hollow phrases'.²⁴ The basis of this bloc is obvious: 'the liquidators enjoy full freedom to pursue their line [...] as before, while Trotsky, [...], screens them with revolutionary phrases, which cost him nothing and do not bind them in any way' (Lenin, *Sobr. soch.*, v. XII, part 1, p. 94, April 1912).²⁵ On the orders of this bloc, comrade Trotsky increasingly slandered the Bolsheviks, as the leaders of the emergent proletariat upsurge, to the International. Comrade Lenin characterised his work at that time as having 'deceived [...]' and, in its

²⁴ Lenin 1963i, p. 24.

²⁵ The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'in *Zhivoye Dyelo* and *Nasha Zarya*'; 'operating abroad' (Lenin 1963i, p. 24).

turn, misled the German workers'.²⁶ Referring to Trotsky's articles directed at the German workers, comrade Lenin wrote that 'they reek of shameless braggadocio and florid lying so overpoweringly as not to permit of any doubt that the liquidators' order for them found itself in experienced hands' (ibid., p. 93).²⁷

But maybe comrade Trotsky was in agreement with the enemies of the Bolsheviks only in their struggle against the Bolshevik organisation? Maybe he diverged from the counter-revolutionary Mensheviks, the servants of the liberals, on questions of the judgement, tasks, aims, tactics of the rising proletarian movement, on questions of the tasks, aims, tactics of the new revolution? Let's listen to Lenin again:

'Swearing and vowing that he was "unifying", and cursing the Conference as hard as he could, Trotsky assured good souls [...] that "the struggle for freedom of association" is the *basis* of the Lena events and of their repercussions, that "this demand is, and will be, the *central* issue of the revolutionary mobilisation of the proletariat". Scarcely a week had passed when these pitiful phrases of the yes-man of the liquidators were swept away like so much dust'.²⁸

'It is only liberal chattering and liberal labour politicians', Lenin continued, 'that can put freedom of association as "the central issue of revolutionary mobilisation"'.²⁹ Comrade Lenin then contrasted the policy of the liquidators and comrade Trotsky with the revolutionary Bolshevik policy of the Petrograd proletariat: 'The [...] proletariat of St. Petersburg', wrote Lenin, 'has realised that a new revolutionary struggle must be started, not for the sake of one right (the freedom of association, L.K.), [...] but for the sake of the freedom of the whole people. The [...] proletariat of St. Petersburg has realised that ... it is necessary to strike at the centre, to attack the source of evil, to destroy the whole system, the whole regime, of the Russia of the tsar and the Black Hundreds. The [...] proletariat of St. Petersburg has realised that it is ridiculous and absurd to claim freedom of association ...'.³⁰ 'Nothing could be more false

26 The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'by the anonymous writer' (Lenin 1963j, p. 535).

27 Lenin 1963i, p. 22.

28 The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'in Vienna on April 23 (May 6)' (Lenin 1963k, p. 114).

29 Lenin 1963k, p. 115.

30 The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'Social-Democratic'; 'even though it should be the most essential, the most important for the working class'; 'Social-Democratic'; 'Social-Democratic' (Lenin 1963k, pp. 114–15).

than the liberal invention, which Trotsky repeats [...] after the liquidators, that "the struggle for freedom of association is the *basis* of both the Lena tragedy and the powerful response to it in the country"' (*Sobr. soch.*, v. XII, part 1, pp. 183, 185).³¹

The difference was crystal clear between the Bolshevik approach to the basic tasks of the second (after 1905) revolution on the one hand, and that of the Mensheviks and comrade Trotsky on the other. But Lenin explained again and again Trotsky's anti-revolutionary approach to these basic tasks.

Trotsky at that time followed the Menshevik Axelrod's idea of 'Europeanising' the struggle of the Russian workers, i.e. as Axelrod himself explained it: 'to fundamentally change the nature of the party as it had developed in the pre-revolutionary period and later in the revolutionary era, and to organise it according to the same principles by which the party system of European Social Democracy was formed'.³² Trotsky bound himself to Axelrod. He saw his superiority to the 'uncultured', the 'barbaric', the 'sectarian-frenzied' Asiatic Bolsheviks in the fact that he, Trotsky, was a 'European' and was fighting 'under the tactical banner of European Social Democracy'.³³ But what did it mean to contrast 'Europeanism' and 'European tactics' against Bolshevism? It meant just one thing: a refusal to take up the direct revolutionary tasks of the workers' movement in the Russia of the Tsar and the landowners for the sake of the parliamentary tactics of European socialists in the Second International. 'The vaunted Europeanisation', wrote Lenin, 'is being talked about in every possible tone by Dan and Martov and Trotsky and [Konstantin] Levitskii and all the liquidators. It is one of the main points of their opportunism'.³⁴ Their opportunism lay in the fact, explained Lenin, that they wanted to impart a 'European' parliamentary propagandist character to the party precisely at that moment when the party was confronted not with European tasks, but the dir-

31 The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'in the Vienna *Pravda*' (Lenin 1963l, p. 103).

32 P.B. Aksel'rod, 'Na ocherednyia temy (Iz pisem P. B. Aksel'roda k druž'iam)', *Nasha zaria. Ezhemesiachnyi zhurnal*, no. 6, 1912, p. 17. Aksel'rod has used the word 'party' here instead of the original term 'Russian Social Democracy' [*Russkaia Sotsialdemokratiia*].

33 I am unable to find the source of these exact quotations, although they echo sentiments expressed less contentiously by Trotsky in his 1906 work, *Results and Prospects* (Trotsky 1965b, pp. 239–47). However, the charge that Trotsky saw Lenin and the Bolsheviks as 'uncultured', 'barbaric', 'sectarian-frenzied' Asiatics was among the charges later levelled at Trotsky in the show trial against the 'Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Centre' in January 1937 (see *Protsess* 1937, p. 171).

34 Lenin 1963m, p. 183.

ectly revolutionary battle. They wanted then to avoid the tasks of revolution, and substitute revolutionary tactics with parliamentary tactics. In the mouths of the liquidators and Trotsky – in the 1910–14 period – the little words about ‘Europeanism’, supplemented with the little words about the ‘barbarism’ of the Bolsheviks, concealed their refusal to take on the revolutionary tasks and the revolutionary tactics of the proletariat in Russia. This is what Lenin wrote about one of Trotsky’s ‘European’ articles: ‘a dream of the opportunist intellectual who, ignoring the difficult non-European conditions of the working-class movement in Russia (Lenin wrote this article for the legal newspaper, *Zvezda* (*The Star*), and therefore used legal terms; it should read: bypassing the revolutionary tasks of the workers’ movement in Russia), drew up a splendid European plan and took advantage of the occasion to boast of his “Europeanism” to the whole world’ (*Sob. soch.*, v. XII, part 1, pp. 222–3, July 1912).³⁵

These tactics, which were in fact preaching the party’s transition from a revolutionary path to the path of the then peaceful European socialists, were being proclaimed at a time when a new wave of revolutionary enthusiasm after the Lena shootings demanded explicitly revolutionary leadership. Maybe somebody will ask the question: how did the theory of ‘permanent revolution’ not restrain comrade Trotsky from such unrevolutionary tactics? How could he, having stuck to this arch-leftist theory in the clearly revolutionary situation of 1912–14, advocate – alongside the Mensheviks – such anti-revolutionary tactics?

But whoever would ask this question would merely prove that he even now has not grasped Lenin’s characterisation of Trotskyism: ‘Rightist politics disguised in leftist (“clumsily leftist, high-sounding”, wrote Lenin) phrasemongering’.³⁶

‘Look at the platform of the liquidators’, comrade Lenin explained to the naïve in 1913: ‘Its liquidationist essence is artfully concealed by Trotsky’s revolutionary phrases. This camouflage may sometimes blind naïve and altogether inexperienced people ... But the most cursory examination will rapidly dissipate this self-deception’.³⁷

We come to 1914. The revolutionary movement of the proletariat marched ever onward. The waves of revolution broke higher and higher. Trotsky’s position remained unchanged on the basic questions of revolution and the tactics of the proletarian movement. This is what Lenin wrote in 1914: ‘Trotsky has

35 Lenin 1963m, p. 185.

36 Parts of this quotation can be found in Lenin 1964y, pp. 325–47.

37 Lenin 1963n, pp. 380–1.

never yet held a firm opinion on any important question of Marxism. He always contrives to "worm his way into the cracks" of any given difference of opinion and desert one side for the other' (Lenin, *Sobr. soch.*, v. XII, part 2, pp. 536–7).³⁸

The liquidators do have their *own* physiognomy, a liberal, not a Marxist one. Anyone familiar with the writings of F. Dan, L. Martov, Potresov and co., is familiar with this physiognomy. Trotsky, however, has never had any 'physiognomy' at all, the only thing he does have is a habit of changing sides, of skipping from the liberals to the Marxists and back again, of mouthing scraps of catchwords and bombastic parrot phrases ... Actually, under cover of high-sounding, empty, and obscure phrases that confuse the non-class-conscious workers, Trotsky is defending the liquidators by passing over in silence the question of the underground (of the revolutionary organisation and the policy of the working class. L.K.), by asserting that there is no liberal-labour policy in Russia, and the like (i.e. no striving by the Mensheviks to subordinate the labour movement to the Kadets. L.K.). Trotsky delivers a long lecture to the seven Duma deputies, headed by Chkheidze, instructing them how to repudiate the 'underground' and the Party in a *more subtle manner*.

LENIN, v. XII, part 2, pp. 410–13³⁹

Then came the critical months of 1914. The workers' movement shifted from mass political and economic strikes to armed demonstrations, interrupted only by the mobilisation of the army. In July, the working class of Petersburg was already on the barricades. It was necessary to take stock, it was necessary to let the working class know what kind of political tendencies and individuals were emerging from the underground, from the foreign emigration, in order to guide the movement in the future. Lenin formulated his conclusions and published them in May 1914 in the Bolshevik journal, *Prosveshchenie* [*Enlightenment*]. He took stock of a decade of struggle between Bolshevism and Trotskyism, a struggle we have been following in its various phases:

The old participants in the Marxist movement in Russia know Trotsky very well, and there is no need to discuss him for their benefit. But the younger generation of workers do not know him, and it is therefore necessary to discuss him, for he is typical ... In the days of the old *Iskra*

38 Lenin 1964z, pp. 447–8.

39 Lenin 1964aa, pp. 159–60.

(1901–3), these waverers, who flitted from the Economists to the Iskraiters and back again, were dubbed ‘Tushino turncoats’ (the name given in the Time of Troubles in Rus to fighting men who went over from one camp to another).

When we speak of liquidationism we speak of a definite ideological trend, which grew up in the course of many years, stems from ‘Menshevism’ and ‘Economism’ in the twenty years’ history of Marxism, and is connected with the policy and ideology of a definite class, the liberal bourgeoisie.

The only ground the ‘Tushino turncoats’ have for claiming that they stand above groups is that they ‘borrow’ their ideas from one group one day and from another the next day. Trotsky was an ardent Iskraite in 1901–3, and Ryazanov described his role at the Congress of 1903 as ‘Lenin’s cudgel’. At the end of 1903, comrade Trotsky was an ardent Menshevik, i.e. he deserted from the ‘Iskraites’ to the ‘Economists’. He said that ‘between the old *Iskra* and the new lies a gulf’. In 1904–5, he deserted the Mensheviks and occupied a vacillating position, now co-operating with Martynov (the ‘Economist’), now proclaiming his absurdly leftist ‘permanent revolution’ theory. In 1906–7, he approached the Bolsheviks, and in the spring of 1907 he declared that he was in agreement with Rosa Luxemburg.

In the period of disintegration, after long ‘non-factional’ vacillation, he again went to the right, and in August 1912, he entered into a bloc with the liquidators. He has now deserted them again, although in substance he reiterates their shoddy ideas.

The younger generation of workers should know exactly whom they are dealing with, when individuals come before them with incredibly pretentious claims, unwilling absolutely to reckon with either the Party decisions, which since 1908 have defined and established our attitude towards liquidationism, or with the experience of the present-day working-class movement in Russia.

LENIN, *Sobranie soch.*, v. XII, part 2, p. 462⁴⁰

Lenin felt that this record of a decade of Bolshevik struggle against not only Menshevism but also Trotskyism needed to be known by the young generation

40 Lenin 1964y, pp. 346–7.

of workers on the eve of the new upsurge in the revolutionary movement of the working class.

Do not think that only those parts from Lenin's works where he expressed himself most sharply about comrade Trotsky have been picked out here – that would be unseemly. No, I used everything in Lenin's works about comrade Trotsky, not in the sense that I used all the quotations – the number of quotations could be multiplied tenfold – but in the sense that these words characterise completely what comrade Lenin believed the Russian workers had to be told about comrade Trotsky before 1914. Everybody understands that when these characterisations are repeated every year, not in reference to one or another mistake but in reference to comrade Trotsky's entire political line, then they are being repeated not for any superficial reasons but because comrade Lenin saw in this individual the embodiment of a current, a political tendency that was harmful to the cause of Bolshevism. For this reason, and for this reason alone, Lenin considered it necessary to warn the party about Trotskyism.

In the Days of War

War came, rightly designated by Il'ich as an event of world historical significance in the life of humanity and the greatest test for international socialism, revealing the unbridgeable gulf between opportunism and the revolutionary communists. The moment came when everyone had to choose their position. The moment came when any vacillations had to cease once and for all, and when what Lenin called petty diplomacy, running from one camp to the other, had to stop.⁴¹

Did this happen? Did the war induce comrade Trotsky to break with opportunism once and for all, to break with the support of the Rightists, to renounce the role of defender and façade for the Mensheviks, which comrade Lenin had been exposing for ten years?

From the time when comrade Trotsky joined our party and began to serve it loyally and truly, thereby writing a glorious page in his own biography and in the history of the party, we chose not to linger on these questions. And that was right. But when he begins to falsify the history and the ideas of Bolshevism, when he tries to expropriate the ideological heritage of the party, when he endeavours to supplant Leninism with Trotskyism as the ideology of the Russian and international proletariat, then he himself forces us to ask these questions.

41 Lenin 19630, p. 270.

Did the war actually separate comrade Trotsky from the opportunists? Did the politics of petty diplomacy cease in the face of the grandiose events? Alas! No. As in 1905, he contrived to combine an ultra-revolutionary 'clumsily leftist' phrase with collaboration with the Mensheviks, just as during the war comrade Trotsky contrived to combine his internationalism with support for opportunism.

Already in the summer of 1915, Lenin wrote: 'During a reactionary war a revolutionary class cannot but desire the defeat of its government. This is axiomatic, and disputed only by conscious partisans or helpless satellites of the social-chauvinists ... Among the latter, Trotsky ...'.⁴² Noting comrade Trotsky's objections to the views of the Bolsheviks,⁴³ comrade Lenin continued: 'This is an instance of high-flown phraseology with which Trotsky always justifies opportunism ... Had [...] Trotsky done a little thinking, they would have realised that *they* have adopted the viewpoint on the war held by governments and the bourgeoisie, i.e. that they cringe to the "political methodology of social-patriotism", to use Trotsky's pretentious language'.⁴⁴ 'Trotsky', Lenin later said, 'who as always entirely disagrees with the social-chauvinists in principle, but agrees with them in everything in practice'.⁴⁵ And then: 'Trotsky, while rejecting this idea, also defends unity with the opportunist and chauvinist *Nasha Zarya* group, i.e. Mensheviks ... All this is a manifestation of the evil which the Dutch Marxists [...] have called "passive radicalism", and which amounts to substituting for Marxism eclecticism in theory and servility to, or impotence in the face of, opportunism in practice'.⁴⁶ And then: '(These)⁴⁷ and Trotsky, in my opinion, are the most harmful "Kautskyists" in the sense that all of them are in various ways in support of unity with the opportunists, all of them are in various ways decorating opportunism, all are engaged (in various ways) in eclecticism rather than revolutionary Marxism'.⁴⁸ And then: 'Martov and Trot-

42 Lenin 1964bb, p. 275.

43 The reader will not find these 'objections', however, in the collection of Trotsky's articles, *Voina i revoliutsiia*, because Trotsky has not published them there [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1923b and Trotskii 1923c].

44 Lenin 1964bb, p. 276. The following name, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original, 'Bukvoyed', a pseudonym of D. Riazanov.

45 Lenin 1964cc, p. 284.

46 Lenin 1964dd, p. 312. Kamenev has added the words 'Mensheviks' to Lenin's quotation. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: '(Gorter and Pannekoek)'.

47 'These' refers to 'Roland-Holst and Rakovskii' (see Lenin 1964ee, p. 117).

48 Lenin 1964ee, pp. 117–18.

sky [want] to combine platonic defence of internationalism with the absolute demand for unity with *Nasha Zarya*, the o.c. [Central Committee of the Mensheviks] or the Chkheidze group'.⁴⁹

The end of 1915: 'Trotsky is in fact helping the liberal-labour politicians in Russia, who by repudiation of the role of the peasantry understand a refusal to raise up the peasants for the revolution!'⁵⁰ (End of 1915).

And later: 'Chkheidze and Co. are obviously being evasive – they are the true friends of *Nashe delo* [the organ of the defencists], they are satisfied with Aleksinskii, [...] and they "play" at leftists with Trotsky's help ... I think that they will not draw in conscious Pravdaites (Bolsheviks)'.⁵¹

And later: 'Trotsky and his Co. of foreign lackeys of opportunism are exerting every effort to "gloss over" disagreements and "rescue" the opportunism of *Nashe zaria* by vindicating and praising the Chkheidze fraction ...'.⁵²

The start of 1916: 'The impotent diplomats, or the "marsh", such as Kautsky in Germany, Longuet in France and Martov and Trotsky in Russia, are causing the greatest harm to the labour movement by their insistence upon a *fictitious* unity, thus *hindering* the now ripe and imminent unification of the *opposition* in all countries and the creation of the Third International'.⁵³

March 1916: 'What about Trotsky? He is body and soul *for* self-determination, but in his case, too, it is an empty phrase, for he does not demand freedom of secession for nations oppressed by the "fatherland" of the socialist of the *given* nationality; he is silent about the hypocrisy of Kautsky and his followers!'⁵⁴

October 1916: Twelve months before our October: 'No matter what the subjective "good" intentions of Trotsky and Martov may be (for Lenin, they are all essentially one and the same!), their evasiveness objectively supports Russian social-imperialism'.⁵⁵

December 1916:

49 Lenin 1964dd, p. 337.

50 Lenin 1964ff, p. 420.

51 Lenin 1964ee, pp. 133–4. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: '(I hope that Plekhanov + Aleksinskii + Co. saw "War"? This is a disgrace!)'.

52 Lenin 1964ee, p. 141.

53 Lenin 1964gg, p. 128.

54 Lenin 1964hh, p. 167.

55 Lenin 1964ii, p. 360. The phrase in brackets is not from Lenin's original quotation.

Hobson [...] as early as 1902 he had an excellent insight into the meaning and significance of a 'United States of Europe' (be it said for the benefit of Trotsky the Kautskyite!) and of all that is now being glossed over by the hypocritical Kautskyites of various countries, namely, that the opportunists (social-chauvinists) are working hand in glove with the imperialist bourgeoisie precisely towards creating an imperialist Europe on the backs of Asia and Africa ... Both in articles and in the resolutions of our Party, we have repeatedly pointed to this most profound connection, the economic connection, between the imperialist bourgeoisie and the opportunism which has triumphed (for long?) in the labour movement. And from this, incidentally, we concluded that a split with the social-chauvinists was inevitable. Our Kautskyites preferred to evade the question.⁵⁶

17 February 1917 (February 1917!): 'The name Trotsky means leftist phrases and a bloc with the Right against the aims of the Left!!'⁵⁷ A month and a half after the February Revolution, Lenin wrote on 17 March 1917: 'In my opinion, the main thing now is not be misled by stupid attempts at "unification" with the social patriots or, still more dangerous, with the vacillators like the organizing committee (of the Mensheviks), of Trotsky and Co., and to continue the work of our own party in a consistently international spirit'.⁵⁸

Only one thing should be added here: throughout this entire period, comrade Trotsky was a resolute opponent of the 'Zimmerwald Left' which was led by comrade Lenin and was the seed from which the Third International grew. The Third International was born not only of the struggle against the Scheidemanns and Vanderveldes, but developed and grew in strength in a struggle against the Zimmerwald 'Centre', against Kautsky and Trotsky. The practical policy of this 'Centre' boiled down to the following: no final break with the Second International, no creation of the Third International, the aims which Lenin strove for as head of the 'Zimmerwald Left'.

This was the political line of comrade Trotsky, as characterised by the words of comrade Lenin over almost two decades. Comrade Lenin did not alter his characterisation of and his attitude towards the line of comrade Trotsky either when the revolutionary tide was at its highest or at its lowest. 'Tushino turn-

56 Lenin 1964jj, p. 110. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'the social-liberal, fails to see that this "counteraction" can be offered *only* by the revolutionary proletariat and *only* in the form of a social revolution. But then he is a social-liberal!'

57 Lenin 1964ee, p. 387.

58 Lenin 1964ee, p. 402.

coats', 'leftist phrases and a bloc with the Right against the aims of the Left', a real service rendered to Economism, Menshevism, Liquidationism, Kautsky-anism in their struggle against Bolshevism under cover of particularly subtle leftist phrases – this was the overall conclusion of this characterisation – not the personality of comrade Trotsky, but 'Trotskyism' as a trend.

No Leninist who takes the name seriously can entertain the idea that comrade Lenin's systematic, decades-long revelation of comrade Trotsky's position was the product of personal motives. Comrade Lenin's systematic and impassioned struggle against Trotskyism was prompted by the fact that comrade Lenin saw in Trotskyism a definite trend that was hostile to the ideology and organisation of the Bolshevik Party, a trend which in practice had served Menshevism. This struggle against Trotskyism was not an accidental element at one or another turning point in history, at one or another event. It was an inevitable part of the forging of the genuine proletarian party and the genuine proletarian ideology. It was relatively easy to fight Menshevism, as comrade Lenin said, because its anti-proletarian nature was open and consistent to the end, it did not conceal its liberal essence. Every worker was able to see through it after even a little exposure to it, and the worker rejected it. It is necessary to fight against those forms of Menshevism which are better concealed, those forms which cloak the opportunistic policies in leftist, revolutionary phrases, the form of Menshevism which adapts Menshevism to the revolutionary mood of the masses. The enemy is not only whosoever fights openly against Bolshevism, but also those little groups that disguise the struggle of these open enemies with revolutionary phrases and, by exploiting the trust in these phrases, further the cause of the enemies of the party.

Lenin merely articulated the attitude towards Trotskyism that characterised the attitude of the Bolshevik Party as a whole, even though – at especially difficult moments in the life of the party – comrade Trotsky sometimes managed to captivate some Bolsheviks with his phrases and his 'petty diplomacy', although always only for a very short time.

It is precisely this latter fact that throws into sharp relief the circumstances which made 'Trotskyism', as a historical phenomenon, into an obstacle to the building of the Bolshevik Party as an ideological leader and organiser of the proletarian movement. Trotskyism was always the form of Menshevism which was most plausible, the best disguised, the most suited to deceive the revolutionary minded workers in particular. Wherever and whenever Menshevism in its naked form, in its Liber-Dan form, turned out to be clearly unacceptable, Trotsky was still able to garner some political credit. That was the case in 1905, in 1912–14, and again during the war. At all of these moments, comrade Trotsky's agile phrasings disguised and saved a Menshevism that had become bankrupt.

In a petty-bourgeois country where even quite recently hardly any intellectual considered themselves to be 'Marxist', where the working class itself directly felt the enormous influence of the petty-bourgeois element, the programme and tactics of the Communist Party could be worked out only in a systematically ruthless, uncompromising struggle against all forms of bourgeois influence on the proletariat. The most dangerous forms of this influence were of course those which were the most 'subtle', the most 'diplomatic', those which were cloaked in the most unprincipled way, which concealed their anti-communist essence, and which thought nothing of cloaking their 'Rightist cause' in 'Leftist phrases' in particular. Trotskyism was the embodiment of these types of anti-Bolshevik influence. When the course of the class struggle expelled from the consciousness of the proletarian any kind of trust in Dan, he left a shadow behind: this shadow was Trotsky. This is why, throughout the history of the party, Trotskyism with its 'Leftist phrases' that cloaked its 'Rightist cause', with its unprincipled preaching of reconciliation between Bolshevism and Menshevism, with its criticism of Leninist 'crudeness', 'barbarianism', 'straightforwardness', 'dogmatism' and 'sectarianism', always fascinated the intelligentsia that was on the edges of and inside of the party.

This is why comrade Lenin for decades regarded Trotskyism as the most dangerous obstacle to the building of the Bolshevik Party. This is why he tirelessly exposed Trotskyism and warned the party against it. This is why the struggle against Trotskyism, like the struggle against Menshevism, is part of the very conception of Bolshevism. Without an understanding of the dangers of Trotskyism – there is no Bolshevism.

2 Comrade Trotsky Joins the Party

Comrade Trotsky prefers to describe the aforementioned relationship between Bolshevism and Trotskyism in these words: 'I came to Lenin fighting'.⁵⁹ This was said not only to curry favour [*koketlivo*], but was also said eloquently. Comrade Trotsky is a master of elegant phrases. The party, the CC, Lenin had always been well-aware of this virtue of comrade Trotsky, and often charged him to deliver those spoken and written statements which demanded an especially beautiful turn-of-phrase. Unfortunately, the issue broached by comrade Trotsky in the above words is too serious to be settled by a beautiful turn-of-phrase.

59 Trotsky 1965a, p. 57.

Firstly, this phrase is not true, and secondly it is designed to transport the reader with its beauty and to conceal Trotsky's real thoughts. In order to tell the truth in its unadorned form, this must be said: this beautiful phrase is pure hypocrisy.

Is it really true that the whole history that we have seen from 1903 until the February Days can be characterised by Trotsky's words: 'I came to Lenin fighting'? Trotsky is evidently quite satisfied with the history of his relationship with Bolshevism; at least, in his little book, *The New Course*, which appeared only a few months ago, he wrote: 'I do not consider the road by which I came to Leninism as less safe and reliable than the others'.⁶⁰ This is very comforting for Trotsky. But can the party, without betraying itself, consider Trotsky's road to our party, as we have just examined with Lenin's guidance, to be reliable and stable? If this road really was a 'road to Lenin', then, following comrade Trotsky's words, every former Menshevik, every former SR, of whom there are not a few in our party, could say: 'I myself was not a Menshevik or an SR, I just came to the Bolsheviks "fighting"'.

One thing at least is clear: the party cannot recommend to anyone the path to Bolshevism taken by Trotsky; and a second thing, it cannot consider this path to be 'reliable' or 'stable'.

Surely not a single person can be found in the party, besides comrade Trotsky, who would suggest that fifteen years of trying to discredit the ideological and organisational foundations of Bolshevism, that a fifteen year bloc, sometimes hidden, sometimes open, with the most malicious enemies of the party, constitutes a 'stable and reliable' road to Lenin? Those comrades who came to our party from the ranks of other parties usually declared that they had been mistaken, that, having had a different understanding of the interests of the working class and a different way of serving it, they were now convinced that their path was wrong, that they acknowledged Bolshevik ideology and repudiated their former errors. The party did not demand any such acknowledgement from Trotsky, and of course was right not to do so: Trotsky took the examination and passed it excellently. But this does not mean at all that the party can permit Trotsky to designate his fifteen years of struggle against the Bolsheviks and Lenin as a stable and reliable path to Leninism; it cannot reconcile itself to the fact that party history was being distorted by brilliant and catchy phrases.

These phrases however not only inaccurately describe the period before Trotsky's entry into the party, they also inaccurately describe the ideological

60 Ibid.

baggage that Trotsky brought when he joined the party. They are inaccurate, because they hide what Trotsky was really thinking. To come to Lenin, even while fighting – does this not mean to repudiate those errors, that which Lenin considered an error, and to recognise the Leninist truth on all of the fundamental questions of the revolution? I maintain that Trotsky understands his road to Lenin in a quite different way, that he does not think that Bolshevism turned out to be more correct than Trotskyism. Trotsky joined the party convinced not that he had to learn Bolshevism from the party, but that he had to teach the party Trotskyism, and freshen up Leninism with Trotskyism. In Trotsky's book *War and Revolution*, we read:

There were three points on which *Nashe slovo* (Trotsky's newspaper) was not in agreement with *Sotsial-demokrat* (the organ of the CC of the Bolsheviks, led by Lenin and Zinoviev. L.K.), even after the former had finally passed into the hands of the left wing of the editorial board. These points dealt with defeatism, the struggle for peace, and the character of the approaching Russian revolution. *Nashe slovo* rejected defeatism (which Lenin, from the very start of the war, considered to be a fundamental feature of genuine revolutionary internationalism. L.K.). *Sotsial-demokrat* rejected the slogan of the struggle for peace, opposing it with the slogan of civil war (which Trotsky rejected. L.K.). Finally, *Nashe slovo* took the position that the task of our party should be to conquer power in the name of the socialist overthrow. *Sotsial-demokrat* maintained the position of a 'democratic' dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry.⁶¹

61 v. 1, p. 27. This book is a collection of articles by Trotsky from the war period, to which I have added comrade Lenin's review above. It is a great pity that the editor of comrade Trotsky's collected works, who gathered in the annotations to 1917 everything that the Sukhanovs, *Novaia zhizn'* and others had to say about comrade Trotsky's pronouncements, did not include in this collection those articles comrade Trotsky wants to use to teach the party, and comrade Lenin's reviews. Perhaps that would have been better for the purposes of educating the young people for whom these books are intended. After all, Trotsky's book *War and Revolution* cannot be understood in our party, especially by the young members of the party and especially by the students in our party, in any other way than as an elucidation of the views of communism. Insofar as our party does not say that it was not like that, that it is not Leninism, that Communism cannot be learnt from this booklet, and insofar as Trotsky did not bother to include comrade Lenin's reviews, it might be understood as a textbook. And we should all care just a little about those who will take our places tomorrow [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1923b. p. 27].

A few lines before this well-known acknowledgement, Trotsky informs us that the disagreement between *Sotsial-Demokrat* and *Nashe slovo*, initially very significant, 'had diminished'.

Not only Trotsky but also Martov was on the editorial board of *Nashe slovo*. But under merciless criticism from Lenin and with the growth of the revolutionary Communist elements, Martov left the editorial board. Trotsky remained on the board of *Nashe slovo*. And after this, after the disagreements 'had diminished', when the newspaper had finally passed into the hands of the left wing of the editorial board, i.e. into Trotsky's hands, precisely these three points of disagreement remained: the question of defeatism, the question of civil war and peace, and the question of the nature of the impending Russian revolution.

This was Trotsky's own description of the disagreements separating the Bolsheviks and Trotsky on the eve of the 1917 revolution; disagreements, as everyone can see, which were by no means secondary, or purely theoretical, or narrowly organisational. No, even Trotsky had to recognise that his disagreements with the Bolsheviks on the eve of the revolution encompassed fundamental, root, crucial questions.

If, as Trotsky put it, the disagreements 'had diminished', and touched on questions of defeatism, civil war, and the nature of the Russian revolution, then it would be interesting to know where Trotsky actually agreed with Lenin. Lenin was in favour of the defeat of 'our own' bourgeoisie in the imperialist war. Trotsky was against this.

Lenin was in favour of civil war, Trotsky was against.

Lenin was in favour of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, Trotsky was against (!) (causing great confusion with his leftist phrases about permanent revolution).

On this last point, Trotsky seemed to be to the left of Lenin. How did this happen? Taking an essentially Menshevik point of view – or at best a centrist point of view – on the concrete questions of the day, on the question of being for or against defeat of our own bourgeoisie in the war, of being for or against the call for civil war, he seemed to be far to the left of Lenin on the question of the impending revolution, and he was not content with the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, but demanded permanent revolution. What was this really about? This was exactly what comrade Lenin had been stating for ten years when dealing with questions of Trotskyism: a rightist policy for today but disguised with clumsy leftist phrases. And so this was Trotsky's position on the eve of the revolution, in his own words. To these three disagreements, by the way, should also be added the disagreement on the question of the Second and Third International that Trotsky had left out. Lenin, leading the Zimmerwald

Left, was in favour of an immediate break with the Second International and with Kautsky, and for the creation of the Third International. Trotsky, as a member of the Kautskyist centre, was against it.

But only a few months after these disagreements had been confirmed once and for all, Trotsky joined the Bolshevik Party. So what happened then to the disagreements between Trotsky and Lenin? In the present piece, Trotsky resorts to mischievous and affected silence: 'The March revolution', he writes, 'wiped out these disagreements'.⁶² All of them? All of them! But how? Trotsky is mischievously silent! But still, how were these not insignificant disagreements eliminated? The party has the right to ask this question, as comrade Trotsky himself has forced it to deal with its own history. Should we understand his declaration that the revolution wiped away all the disagreements between Trotsky and Bolshevism in the sense that Trotsky, having become convinced that his position on all these not insignificant points was wrong, had come over to the viewpoint of the Bolsheviks? That is what one of the most prominent theoreticians of Menshevism, comrade Martynov, did: 'I have served the working class in my own way for thirty years, and now I see that my path was wrong. History has confirmed the correctness of comrade Lenin's views on the Russian revolution, and I am joining him'.⁶³ Comrade Trotsky has not given the party this answer.

Trotsky on Himself and Leninism

We do, however, have an answer from him. In his book *1905* (pp. 4–5), Trotsky writes: 'It was precisely in the interval between January 9 and the October strike of 1905 that those views [on the nature of Russia's revolutionary development] which came to be called the theory of "permanent revolution" were formed in the author's (i.e. Trotsky's) mind ... Despite an interruption of twelve years, this analysis has been entirely confirmed' (written in 1922. L.K.).⁶⁴ In Trotsky's view this was the happy fate of his, Trotsky's, theory.

But throughout these twelve years, this theory was opposed by another theory, Lenin's theory, as expressed in the formula 'revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry'.⁶⁵ 'Lenin', Trotsky wrote in

62 Trotsky 1923b, p. 27.

63 I am unable to locate this precise quotation. However, similar sentiments at this time can be found in Martynov's panegyric to Lenin after his death (see A. Martynov, 'Velikii proletarskii vozhd', *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional*, no. 1, 1924, pp. 51–79).

64 Trotsky 1972b, pp. vi, vii. The phrase in square brackets is in Kamenev's quotation of Trotsky, although not in the translated work.

65 Lenin 1962c, pp. 293–303.

1908, and repeated without any reservation in 1922, 'has never tired of repeating this idea ever since 1904. But that does not make it any more correct'.⁶⁶

Trotsky states that twelve years after its origination, i.e. in the 1917 revolution, his theory 'has been entirely confirmed'. What does this mean for Lenin's theory? Does it mean that it was not confirmed? Two theories, which opposed each other for a decade, and on the basis of one of which Lenin stated that it was not a theory of Russian revolution but a revolutionary phrase disguising a philistine from Menshevism and Bolshevism, could not both be true at the same time. If Trotsky's theory has indeed been borne out, then this means that Lenin's theory, the banner under which he brought the party together for twelve years, had suffered some kind of calamity. And so it had: a calamity had indeed taken place. We know this from Trotsky. In the same book (1905), Trotsky, describing Lenin's idea as an empty abstraction, wrote that the Bolsheviks 'arrive at the idea of a proletariat in possession of state power imposing a bourgeois-democratic limitation upon itself'.⁶⁷ 'It is true', Trotsky continues, 'that the difference between them (Mensheviks and Bolsheviks) in this matter is very considerable: while the anti-revolutionary aspects of Menshevism have already become fully apparent, the *anti-revolutionary aspects of Bolshevism* (my emphasis on account of the importance of these words. L.K.) are likely to become a serious threat only in the event of victory'.⁶⁸ It even turns out that 'both Mensheviks and Bolsheviks ... become scared of the consequences of the class struggle'.⁶⁹

And so we can immediately see here several extremely curious things. First, it turns out that the Leninist theory of the Russian Revolution was dictated by fear of the consequences of the class struggle of the proletariat. This at once beautifully confirms how much Trotsky understands Bolshevism, and secondly – and this is the most important thing – we see that both Bolshevism and Mensheviks possess anti-revolutionary aspects, and that these anti-revolutionary features of Bolsheviks are especially dangerous in the event of revolutionary victory. Clearly, a theory which possesses anti-revolutionary features is especially dangerous in the sense that they are a warning in the event of revolutionary victory never to lead the proletariat into battle unless there is some hope of victory.

Reprinting and confirming this characterisation of Bolshevism in 1922, Trotsky added this note to his point about the dangers of the anti-revolutionary

66 Trotsky 1972b, p. 314.

67 Trotsky 1972b, p. 316.

68 Trotsky 1972b, pp. 316–17.

69 Trotsky 1972b, p. 317.

features of Bolshevism: 'This threat, as we know, never materialized because, under the leadership of Comrade Lenin, the Bolsheviks changed their policy line on this most important matter ... in the spring of 1917, that is, before the seizure of power' (L. Trotsky, *1905 g.*, p. 285).⁷⁰

Trotsky's idea is clear now. The views of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party on the nature of the revolution, as developed from 1904 to the spring of 1917, were not only incorrect but were also counter-revolutionary vis-à-vis the socialist revolution.

Trotsky's views on this same question were 'entirely confirmed'. In light of this, Lenin and Bolshevism in the spring of 1917 and before the seizure of power were obliged in order to seize power to 're-arm themselves', i.e. exchange the counter-revolutionary weapons of Bolshevism with the genuinely revolutionary weapon already procured by Trotsky twelve years earlier. In this sense the revolution erased any disagreements.

After this, Trotsky joined the Bolshevik Party.

'I came to Lenin because Lenin brought the party to me' – this is what underpins Trotsky's fiction, this is what he hints at, this is where he wants to lead the reader who trusts in him. The striking phrase – 'I came to Lenin fighting' – is hypocritical because Trotsky is convinced that Lenin came over to Trotsky in 1917 after building the party for a decade and a half on the basis of 'anti-revolutionary' ideas.

It turns out that Trotsky was right all along in his ideological struggle with Bolshevism and Lenin up to 1917. This is the message of all of Trotsky's latest books (*1905* and *1917*). Lenin was right only from spring 1917 and right only inasmuch as he discarded the weapon of his own theory and rearmed himself with Trotsky's theory.

Isn't it true that the picture is now completely clear? Twelve years ago, Trotsky advanced the theory of permanent revolution. He claims that this theory was borne out completely in 1917. Lenin's theory, on the basis of which he founded and built the party over ten years, contained anti-revolutionary features and therefore, before going into battle and in order to win, Bolshevism had to re-arm. How exactly? That is quite clear – discard the weaponry of Bolshevism with its anti-revolutionary features and take up new weapons suited to the tasks confronting the proletariat. It turns out that the old weapon, the weapon of Bolshevik ideology, was incapable of solving the tasks of October. It was necessary to re-arm and, of course, it was necessary to get those new arms from the arsenal which contained the weapon stored twelve years earlier and

70 Trotsky 1972b, p. 317n.

which did not have any anti-revolutionary rottenness at all: it was necessary to turn to comrade Trotsky's weapon. This was comrade Trotsky's real idea, this is the history of our party according to Trotsky. Lenin's theory, which from the very beginning contained anti-revolutionary features, failed, and when the proletariat joined the real fight, it was supposed to be discarded and then substituted. Bolshevism turned out to be capable of organising the proletariat, of leading it to October, of accomplishing the October victory, only because it discarded the Bolshevik weaponry in timely fashion and replaced it with comrade Trotsky's weaponry.

If this had really happened, then it should be stated openly. If Bolshevism contains anti-revolutionary features, if we have to change our weapons before a decisive battle, then by what right do we teach uncorrected Bolshevism to our proletariat and to the proletariat of the whole world? Then why don't any of our textbooks tell the proletariat both of our own country and of the whole world the following: Comrades! We teach you Bolshevism, but remember that Bolshevism contains anti-revolutionary features; when the fighting begins, then you will not be able to manage with the weapon of Bolshevism. You will have to replace it with another, the weapon of Trotskyism. If this were so, then we would not have the right, even out of respect for Lenin, to arm the proletariat ideologically with the kind of weapon that has to be discarded before the fight. The individual writer can sacrifice historical truth, the genuine role of Lenin, the ideological baggage of our party, to the accumulated struggle of the working class. He can scorn all this in order to say that when the battle came the party had to take my weapon, and discard its own. But the party cannot be dishonourable, it must teach the proletariat either Leninism or Trotskyism, or it must say: 'Leninism must be freshened up with Trotskyism'. But it cannot teach Leninism to everyone, in toto, without corrections, as a theory and practice of world revolution, and at the same time hint that the theory and practice of proletarian revolution is actually rooted not in Leninism but in ideas generated by Trotsky 'between January 9 and the October strike of 1905'. (What attention to the date of birth of one's own ideas! What attention to one's own biography!).

Either we teach Bolshevism, Leninism lock, stock and barrel, without corrections, as the true theory of proletarian revolution, or, if anybody thinks that this is not the true theory of proletarian revolution and that it has to be supplemented a little by Trotskyism in order to make it so, then he must state openly and clearly what corrections have to be made. If there is something anti-revolutionary in Bolshevism's teachings about the revolution – then Lenin's works before the spring of 1917 cannot serve as the scientific authority on the proletarian war and the proletarian strategy against the bourgeoisie. Or it must at least be said: this is ancient history which can be studied but which cannot

teach how to make a revolution, and making a proletarian revolution must be learned not from Lenin before 1917 but from Trotsky starting from 1905.

The October Revolution was achieved either under the banner of Leninism, without corrections, or it was achieved under the banner of Trotskyism and its corrections of Lenin, for Bolshevism turned out to be an unsuitable tool for solving the tasks it faced from February to October. A choice must be made. On the one hand, the ideological essence of the argument, on the other, Trotsky forces the party to ask: what were we, and what will we teach not only our, but also the international, proletariat, which wants to know and has a right to know who was right. Either the party says that Leninism needs no corrective from Trotskyism to be the theory of the proletarian war against the bourgeoisie, or comrade Trotsky says that Leninism must be re-examined before we launch an assault with open eyes on the capitalist bastions. Trotsky artfully leads his reader to this fundamental idea: ideologically October turned out to be not Leninism but Trotskyism; and this theory was borne out completely, October came, we explain October, and October can be understood only with his, not Lenin's, theory; the theory of permanent revolution must be rehabilitated and acknowledged as the ideological weapon which brought us victory in October.

After this, I ask myself what this phrase means: 'I came to Lenin fighting'? It means: I, Trotsky, came to Lenin because, on the fundamental questions about the nature of the Russian Revolution, Lenin brought the party to Trotskyism. Truly, if Trotsky's theory was 'borne out completely' in the October Revolution, and Lenin had to rethink Bolshevism and discard its 'anti-revolutionary' features, then this would mean that in the ideological realm Lenin came to Trotsky and not the other way round. A choice must be made. A subtle and quite hypocritical substitution is taking place here.

It might have been expected beforehand that Trotsky, in order to offer some satisfaction to the party which had benefitted him so much, would gladly acknowledge that he had made some kind of organisational mistakes in the past. How costly would such an acknowledgement of past organisational mistakes be if it was the price for justifying the substitution of Leninism with Trotskyism, if this acknowledgement concealed the assertion that it was Trotsky who furnished the Bolshevik Party with the sharply honed weapon, with the real revolutionary theory, fit for the world tasks of the Russian proletariat, if this acknowledgement could serve as a cover for the unpunished assertion in the name of the party that Bolshevism-Leninism contained anti-revolutionary features? Paris is well worth a Mass!⁷¹ In order to appropriate the role of the

71 A phrase conveying one's readiness to give up one's principles to secure a greater goal. In

ideological inspiration and theoretician of the Bolsheviks and the October Revolution, it is worth admitting even significant, even very significant, organisational failures in the past.

In his 'The Lessons of October', Trotsky does indeed make this 'concession' to the party. 'I have admitted [...] my real and major organisational mistakes',⁷² he writes, in order later, under cover of this phrase, to devote his article entirely to proving that in fact in the realm of fundamental, and not organisational, questions of the revolution he turned out to be entirely in the right against Bolshevism and against Lenin.

But was the fifteen-year conflict between Lenin and the Bolsheviks on the one hand, and Trotskyism on the other, really about organisational questions? These were trifling matters, a distraction. The conflict was really about fundamental questions of revolution, about the mutual relations of the classes during revolution, for that question – 'permanent revolution' or comrade Lenin's theory – was about the role of the peasantry in the revolution, about the paths to socialism in an agrarian country, about the methods and conditions of achieving a dictatorship of the proletariat in a country with an overwhelmingly peasant population. This was not a conflict over abstract formulas. This was a conflict about the roads available to the proletariat to take and retain power in a peasant country. This conflict was not only about yesterday, but also about today and tomorrow. 'The theory and practice' of Lenin is the response to this question. 'The theory of permanent revolution' – Trotsky's theory – was built entirely on an underestimation of the role of the peasantry, and was a response to just one question: how not to take and retain power under these conditions. This is the basis of the conflict, and this is why Trotsky's attempt to substitute Leninism with Trotskyism calls for a resolute protest.

And so, from under this pile of distortions, self-praise, and ideas that have nothing to do with the business of studying October, which fills 'The Lessons of October', a certain core of Trotsky's principles and ideas can be extracted. It can be expressed in its entirety in his words: 'Even before 1905, Lenin captured the uniqueness of the Russian revolution in the formula of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. This formulation, as later events showed, can only be taken to mean a stage'.⁷³ This is followed by a literary depiction, the idea of which is as follows: 'only a stage' on the way to Trotsky's

the French Wars of Religion in the sixteenth century, Henry IV's inability as a Protestant king to capture Catholic Paris persuaded him to convert in 1593, after which he was received into Paris a year later. He was reputed to have said: 'Paris vaut bien une messe'.

72 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 137.

73 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 91.

formulation – this is absolutely what is meant. In itself, Lenin's formulation, 'as later events showed', could only be significant as a stage on the way to Trotsky. And comrade Trotsky knew splendidly what he wanted to say, and said exactly that. So, if the party agrees with this, then it should say so directly, then it should take this onto the international stage and tell the Comintern: study the first fifteen years of Lenin's activities, but remember that this is only a stage on the road to Trotsky, 'as later events showed'.

This is the intellectual essence of Trotsky's entire recent book. Trotsky substitutes Leninism with Trotskyism with all the skill, with all the literary art, at his disposal; but he possesses a greater art: this book is not written for the broad masses, not for the whole party, it is written for the young, emerging generation, for those who will decide the fate of the party in the future, tomorrow, in a year, or in two. The aim of this latest publication by Trotsky, the aim of his book 1917, is to take revenge for the twelve years when Lenin was exposing the entire wretchedness of Trotsky's politics, the aim is to show that the revolution confirmed his (Trotsky's) theory, and, by substituting Bolshevism with Trotskyism, to poison the minds of the future leaders of the party who are now studying in the Communist universities, Soviet party schools, workers' faculties, institutions of higher education, etc. We cannot allow this to happen. We must put the question clearly: either we study Lenin and Leninism, or we must roll up our banner and identify Trotsky as the ideologist of the Bolshevik Party at the most critical moment of the revolution. A choice must be made. Boasting, not mentioning things, or phrases like the March Revolution 'wiped out the disagreement' and 'I came to Lenin fighting' are no help at all.

In this book (1917), Trotsky inveighs against Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov and others. I will speak about this and about my own mistakes, but do not think that these reproaches are only intended for us. In this book, the names Kamenev and Zinoviev are used to beat Lenin. The whole question of the fate of Bolshevism can be posed thus: Lenin had the correct theory, but Lenin's followers were not able to apply it, could not sort themselves out in time, could not understand the circumstances of the time and place. The formula was correct, the slogan was correct, but this or that Bolshevik carried it out poorly. The question can be posed in that way, but it can also be posed in this way: if you draw all of the logical conclusions from the Leninist formula, you will inevitably end up in a quagmire: the formula is wrong, and people have applied this incorrect formula in a logically correct way. In the first case, this is a corroboration of Bolshevik theory and an indication of the errors of individual Bolsheviks. In the second case, when Lenin's closest followers are said to have accepted his formula and ended up in a quagmire by applying it literally after learning everything from Trotsky about the anti-revolutionary features of Leninism, after knowing that

Trotsky's, not Lenin's, theory was 'confirmed entirely', then we see in the second case that the blows are directed not so much against Kamenev and Zinoviev, as Kamenev and Zinoviev are used to beat Lenin's basic formula. This is the basis of 'The Lessons of October'. It represents but a continuation, a grounding, a development of Trotsky's aforementioned statements in 1908 or, and only in a slightly disguised form, it continues Trotsky's polemic at that time against Lenin. 'The Lessons of October' has a deeper purpose than it would seem to have at first blush. On the surface, it seems to be an exposé of Zinoviev and Kamenev. That it is, but it is more, namely that Kamenev's and Zinoviev's mistakes discredit the basic Leninist formulas and promote Trotskyism.

The party cannot and must not overlook this substitution of Leninism with Trotskyism carried out under the banner of Lenin. Either one or the other. Either Leninism has anti-revolutionary features, and Bolshevism would have to repudiate its own past in order to make October – and then that would have to be said, that would have to be introduced into those textbooks of Leninism that the party uses to educate millions of its members; the Communists of Europe should be told about this clearly and precisely. Or it is a lie, an ideological muddle – and in that case why does it have the right to survive, to be disseminated under the flag of Leninism, under the guise of praising Lenin, praise which, in these conditions, takes on a very 'strange', not to say hypocritical, character? The party must defend Lenin's basic formulas against their substitution with Trotskyism. What are these basic formulas, and how did Lenin implement them?

Lenin in April 1917

We have seen how comrade Trotsky represented the theory we were armed with when we embarked on the period of the October Revolution. We saw that his version argued that the old Bolshevik theory, whose basic features Lenin created on the basis of the experience of the mass movement of the proletariat and the peasantry in 1905, on the basis of the practical work of the first Soviets of Workers' Deputies in 1905, that this theory failed in the spring of 1917, that Bolshevism had to rearm itself in order to be capable of meeting the new tasks, that in essence it had to discard the old Bolshevik theory and turn to Trotsky.⁷⁴ That is how comrade Trotsky presented the matter. With this thought in mind, he joined the party and stayed in it.

Is it true that Bolshevism, in order to solve the problems of the revolution, had to repudiate its own past? Is it true that the theory of the revolutionary

74 On the need for the party to 'rearm' [*vooruzhenie*], see Trotsky 1965a, p. 51.

democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasantry had to be discarded as clearly inadequate for the current conditions? How was it in reality, and how did Lenin understand this? What really happened – and only Lenin understood it in this way – was that the Bolshevik idea of the ‘revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry’ was completely realised in the Russian Revolution, and, having been realised, began to develop and continued to develop into the Bolshevik idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat. This development went hand-in-hand with the change in the correlation of classes in the course of the Russian Revolution. Anyone who does not understand this has understood nothing either of Leninism, of the history of the party, or of the history of the revolution.

To answer the questions posed above, we must address the moment when, in Trotsky’s opinion, Lenin carried out the re-arming, i.e. spring 1917, and the programme and tactics of the revolution that Lenin was advocating at that time. I am taking the most seminal piece by Lenin from those days – ‘Letters on Tactics’, in which he comments, explains, and spells out to the party his famous theses of 4 April. What does Lenin say about the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry? Does it really have to be acknowledged that this theory turned out to be incorrect?

Lenin writes: ‘The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has already become a reality in the Russian revolution ... The Soviet of Workers’ and Soldiers’ Deputies – there you have the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry already accomplished in reality’ (*Sobr. soch. Lenina*, v. XIV, part 1, p. 29).⁷⁵ ‘The Soviet is the implementation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the soldiers; among the latter the majority are peasants. It is therefore a dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry’.⁷⁶ ‘We are still a minority and realise the need for winning a majority’ (in these organs of the dictatorship).⁷⁷

So, according to Lenin, it is not a matter of this formula turning out to be unsuitable for revolution and not appropriate for the course of the class struggle. No, his first words were that our theory becomes reality in the course of the revolution, in the living institutions created by the movement of the genuine masses of the proletariat and peasantry. From that fact that the Bolshevik theory of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry has been realised, Lenin draws the only – and of course correct – con-

75 Lenin 1964b, pp. 44–5.

76 Lenin 1964kk, p. 142.

77 Lenin 1964kk, p. 145.

clusion possible: once our theory has been realised, we must move forward. How? In such a way that we bring together and unite the proletarian elements of town and country against the petty-bourgeois elements on the basis of the accomplished dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. Do not dwell on the Bolshevik formula that has been put into practice in the revolution, go further – said Lenin to those Bolsheviks who were stumbling at a stage of revolution that had already been achieved. He does not say that the Bolshevik formula of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry turned out to be unsuited to and inconsonant with the class interests of the proletariat. He says: you do not realise that it has been accomplished – accomplished ‘in its own way, as with any theory’,⁷⁸ adds Lenin – but accomplished; and once it has been accomplished, move on. And what does it mean to move on from the formula of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry? It means bringing together and organising the proletarian elements on the basis of this dictatorship, in order to move on from the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the purely social overthrow [*sotsial'nyi perevorot*]. This is Lenin's thinking on whether the course of the Russian Revolution was consistent with the old Bolshevik formula. But Lenin – the genuine, realist politician, the genuine leader of the masses – understood that the transition from the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to the socialist revolution [*sotsialisticheskaia revoliutsiia*] – is a very complex thing, towards which we must proceed, but to proceed while looking constantly at the peasantry, realising the dictatorship of the proletariat in such a way that every stage of this transition is supported by the peasantry. For this reason, Lenin constantly adapted his tactics to the development of the mass peasant movement, and specifically studied the ‘peculiarity’ of the realisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, which consisted of the fact that the latter, at the given stage of the revolution, retained its trust in the bourgeois government in the form of ‘defencism’. Describing the views of those Bolsheviks who were in conflict with him (including myself), and after sharply attacking us, Lenin writes:

A Marxist must not abandon the ground of careful analysis of class relations. The bourgeoisie is in power. But is not the mass of the peasants *also* a bourgeoisie, only of a different social stratum, of a different kind, of a different character? Whence does it follow that *this* stratum *cannot* come to power, thus ‘completing’ the bourgeois-democratic revolution? Why

78 If this is a direct quotation from Lenin, I have been unable to find the source for it.

should this be impossible? This is how the old Bolsheviks often argue. My reply is that it is quite possible ... Possibly the peasantry may seize all the land and all the power.

When the peasantry stops supporting the government via the SR and Menshevik Soviets, 'when', continues Lenin, 'the peasantry separates from the bourgeoisie, seizes the land and power despite the bourgeoisie, that will be a new stage in the bourgeois-democratic revolution; and that matter will be dealt with separately'.⁷⁹

That is much more complicated than Trotsky's theory, which is as straight as the crow flies. For Trotsky, with his slogan of 'Out with the Tsar, and in with the workers' government', everything is very simple, because he ignores the peasantry and does not understand the conditions for accomplishing the dictatorship of the proletariat not in England, not in America, not in Germany, but in an agrarian, capitalistically backward country.

Where does Lenin's greatness come from? The greatness of Lenin lies in the fact that he began and carried out the dictatorship of the proletariat under the specific conditions of an agrarian country, constantly keeping sight of the real elements upon which this dictatorship could not only be proclaimed, but also built. For this very reason, even in April 1917, he included in his considerations the possibility of a new stage of the 'bourgeois-democratic revolution', the result of a break of the peasantry from the Provisional Government and SRS.

'Who knows', he wrote, 'whether it is still possible at present for a special "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry", detached from the bourgeois government, to emerge in Russia?'⁸⁰ And indeed, in April it was not yet known whether there would be a moment in the course of the Russian Revolution, when the peasantry, having abandoned the SR and Menshevik Soviets, while not going so far as to support the dictatorship of the proletariat, would come out against the Provisional Government. Il'ich, as a realistic politician and leader of the masses, knowing that we accomplished the policy of the proletariat in the peculiar conditions of an agrarian country, designed his tactics for both eventualities: 'in the event that Russia will yet experience a special "dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" independent of the bourgeoisie, and in the event that the petty bourgeoisie will not be able to tear itself away from the bourgeoisie and will oscillate eternally (that is, until socialism is established) between us and it' (*Sobr. soch.*, v. XIV).⁸¹

79 Lenin 1964b, pp. 46–7.

80 Lenin 1964b, pp. 50–1.

81 Lenin 1964b, p. 51.

You see how Lenin approaches the class relations in the revolution, the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, how he imagines the transition from the bourgeois revolution, crowned with the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, to the socialist revolution. For Lenin, the development of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship into the dictatorship of the proletariat was by no means as simple and linear as the author of the permanent revolution has understood it and continues to understand it today. Lenin would not have been Lenin, i.e. he would not have been the practical leader of millions in the class struggle, if he had really rearmed according to Trotsky, for Trotsky's theory would inevitably have led to the collapse of both the proletariat and the peasantry. In its pure form, Trotsky's political line ignores the peasantry, ignores the transitional stages when the peasantry initially places its trust in the ruling bourgeoisie, and later becomes disappointed and turns against it, but does not yet join the proletariat as a whole; and, finally, it ignores the final stage, when the proletariat, on the basis of the peasant insurrection, while leading the peasantry, achieves a dictatorship, testing and adapting various forms of the union of the workers and peasants.

This entire Realpolitik of the working class, which alone can achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat, is to Trotsky a seven-veiled mystery; it is completely inaccessible from the viewpoint of his theory, which he is now – in retrospect – trying to push on the party and the revolution.

Lenin knew very well that to fall behind the course of the revolution meant to cause great harm to both the revolution and the party, but he also knew very well that the 'underestimation of the peasantry', a basic feature of Trotskyism, is the greatest danger for the revolution and for the party. Therefore, while categorically insisting on the need to move forward from the revolutionary democratic dictatorship, he also assiduously cautioned the party against taking the path of Trotskyism.

'It is necessary to move forward', said Lenin in the spring of 1917, when he, as it were, 're-armed Bolshevism' – but to move forward, starting with the transition from the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the socialist revolution, but not by taking Trotsky's path, for Trotskyism is impracticable throughout, marked by the underestimation of the peasantry, by a lack of understanding of how the dictatorship of the proletariat is realised in a peasant country.

In the same pamphlet where he polemicised with the old Bolsheviks, Lenin wrote: 'But are we not in danger of falling into subjectivism, of wanting to arrive at the socialist revolution by "skipping" the bourgeois-democratic revolution, which is not yet completed and has not yet exhausted the peasant movement?

I might be incurring this danger if I said: "No Tsar, but a workers' government". But I did not say that', Lenin wrote and emphasised, 'I said something else'.⁸²

'In my theses, I absolutely ensured myself against skipping over the peasant movement, which has not outlived itself, or the petty-bourgeois movement in general, against any playing at "seizure of power" by a workers' government ...'.⁸³ And continuing, as if 'to rearm', at the Petersburg conference in those same days, Lenin did not forget to warn: 'Trotskyism – No tsar, but a workers' government. This is wrong. A petty bourgeoisie (i.e. the peasantry. L.K.) exists, and it cannot be dismissed'.⁸⁴

Is this not the literal repetition in the heat of the revolution (in the heat of the 'rearming' according to Trotsky) of precisely what Lenin had warned the party so far in advance? 'Comrade Trotsky's fundamental error ... is the lack of any clear thinking on the question of the transition from this (bourgeois) revolution to a socialist revolution', wrote Lenin in 1910.⁸⁵

The primary task of the revolutionary party is to explain the interrelationship of classes in the coming revolution. Trotsky's response to this issue was wrong, when he repeated his 'original' theory of 1905 and did not want to ponder the reasons why life had passed this splendid theory by for the past decade. Trotsky's original theory takes from the Bolsheviks the call for a decisive revolutionary struggle by the proletariat and for the seizure of political power by it, and takes from the Mensheviks the 'denial' of the role of the peasantry. The peasantry had become stratified, differentiated; its potential role had steadily diminished. Trotsky did not believe that if the proletariat induced the non-proletarian masses in the countryside to confiscate the land of the landowners and to overthrow the monarchy, the 'national bourgeois revolution' in Russia would be achieved, and that this would be a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry (written in October 1916 on the eve of the revolution). And now Trotsky has the audacity to say that his theory was 'confirmed entirely' in 1917, and still call himself a Leninist ... No, a choice must be made.

This was what Lenin feared: lagging behind the course of development of the revolutionary movement, and he severely criticised those (including me), who could not see that the revolution had already passed from one stage to the next. But, moving forward, he most feared that the party would fall into the

82 Lenin 1964b, p. 48.

83 Ibid.

84 Lenin 1964kk, p. 150.

85 I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

rut of Trotsky's abstract theory, which he accused for the umpteenth time of skipping over the peasant movement before it had become obsolete.

For this reason, Lenin had no need to re-arm. The old Leninist theory, the old Leninist, Bolshevik conception of the nature of the Russian Revolution and of the relations between the proletariat and peasantry, was fully confirmed, according to Lenin's words. On the basis of this confirmation, we had to move forward, but, moving forward, we must not in any way fall into Trotsky's mistaken footsteps which would have led to the defeat of the dictatorship and the proletariat, because he did not know, as Trotsky has never known, how to build the dictatorship of the proletariat while taking into consideration the real relationship between the peasantry and the proletariat.

Lenin, in that same pamphlet of spring 1917 when he, as it were, 're-armed', reminds us that 12 years before, in July 1905, while promoting the slogan 'revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry', he wrote the following (Lenin is quoting his own article): 'Like everything else in the world, the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has a past and a future ... Its future is the struggle against private property, the struggle of the wage-worker against the employer, the struggle for socialism'.⁸⁶

Why should Lenin and Bolshevism rearm and learn from Trotsky about the 'permanent revolution', if 12 years before 1917 Lenin had predicted that when the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry became a reality, it would be necessary to proceed to the dictatorship of the proletariat, but to proceed to it by taking the peasantry into consideration, and by creating those conditions whereby the peasantry would follow the proletariat, and not by skipping over the peasantry, as Trotsky suggested. Bolshevism does not need to borrow weapons from Trotsky's arsenal.

This was how Bolshevism actually approached those tasks which confronted us in 1917. This was no 'rearming', no discarding of 'anti-revolutionary features', no patching of an unravelling Bolshevism with Trotskyism, but rather the deployment of Bolshevik slogans, which were the basis of Bolshevism, their deployment, their adaptation to the timing and pacing of the course of revolution and first and foremost to the distinct nature of this course as influenced by the war and the peasant movement.

At the same time, some Bolsheviks did not advance as rapidly from stage to stage as was required by the tremendous acceleration in the revolution caused by the enormous pressure of the war. Anyone who looked at the history

86 Lenin 1964b, p. 52. Lenin is quoting from his own article from July 1905, see Lenin 1962d, pp. 84–5.

of Bolshevism as something alien to him might have skipped and danced about this. But the fact that some Bolsheviks did not so quickly take the path of revolution marked out by Bolshevism in no way means that Bolshevism was on the wrong track, that it led not to victory but to a swamp, or that it had to be modified during the revolution. But that is precisely what Trotsky was trying to argue with his phrases about the anti-revolutionary features of Bolshevism, about its need to rearm, about the notion that it was not the Leninist 'revolutionary democratic dictatorship' that was correct but Trotsky's 'permanent' revolution.

Lenin built his tactics, as I said, both on the eventuality of the independent, peasant movement casting off the yoke of the Mensheviks and SRs, who were dragging it towards the bourgeoisie, and also on the eventuality of the peasantry turning out to be unable to break loose from the power of the bourgeoisie. And whoever does not understand that the entire tactics of the Bolsheviks and especially of Lenin, from February to October, had to consider these two possibilities all the time, and that Lenin all the while was manoeuvring so that the proletariat would draw in the peasantry and base the power of the working class on an alliance with the peasantry, that person understands nothing of the history of Bolshevism during these months.

And Trotsky did not understand the slightest thing in this regard, because he did not understand the basics about the Leninist theory of the relations between the working class and the peasantry in the Russian revolution. He did not understand this even after October, and he did not understand it at each turning point made by our party, when it manoeuvred to achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat without any separation from the peasantry. He had been prevented from understanding this by his own theory, which, in his opinion, had been 'confirmed entirely'. If Trotsky's theory had proven correct, this would have meant that any kind of Soviet power in Russia would have long since ceased to exist. Ignoring the peasantry, not paying any attention to solving the issue of the alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry, this theory of 'permanent revolution', would make the workers' government in Russia wholly dependent on the immediate proletarian revolution in the West. According to this theory, 'the proletariat, having taken power, is confronted by the deepest contradictions', its power will be faced with objective, socialist tasks: 'the solution of these problems will, at a certain stage, be prevented by the country's economic backwardness. There is no way out from this contradiction within the framework of a national revolution'.⁸⁷ Under such conditions, a

87 See L. Trotsky, 1905, p. 286 [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1972b, p. 317].

delay or postponement of the world proletarian revolution would have caused the immediate collapse of the government of the workers' dictatorship in Russia. This is why the adherents of 'permanent revolution' must inevitably pass through frantic stages of despair and deep pessimism to attempts by force, by military fiat, to overcome the backwardness of the country.

Genuine Bolshevik policy, as pursued by Lenin from February to October, has nothing in common with either this policy or this psychology. Anyone who does not understand this is unable to grasp the change in slogans in the history of the Bolshevik movement from February to October. 'Soviet Power', when the Mensheviks and SRs had a majority in the Soviets, and when we were in the minority; the dropping of the slogan 'Soviet Power', as Lenin proposed after the July days; the proposal to the Mensheviks of a compromise and of peaceful competition in the Soviets in September ... Of course, we can never understand this if we do not understand that the policy of Leninism is fundamentally different from the policy of Trotskyism.

How did matters stand in October and immediately afterwards? From the standpoint of Marxism, from the standpoint of the analysis of the class forces of the revolution, surely the Second Congress of Soviets' acceptance – at Lenin's suggestion – of the SR decree on land, surely the inclusion – at Lenin's suggestion – of the Left SRs in the Soviet government, surely the naming – at Lenin's suggestion – of the government created by the October Revolution as the 'workers' and peasants' government' – surely all this – if we express it in terms of biological evolution from one form into another – was the 'experience' of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry' in a system which was essentially already a 'dictatorship of the proletariat'? Some of these facts of the October Revolution might be left out, but then this would not be a scientific analysis of Lenin's policy. And what about the transition from War Communism to NEP, from the Committees of the Village Poor [*Komitety krest'ianskoi bednoty*] to Lenin's speech about the 'middle peasantry'? How can this be reconciled with the theory of 'permanent revolution'? It cannot. The policy of the working class, now in power in Russia, can only be understood if we have the teachings of Leninism at hand. This explains all the different methods and approaches, all the transitions from one method of struggle to another, from February to October and beyond.

In 1916, Lenin wrote that for ten years life had been bypassing Trotsky's splendid theory. Now we can add another eight years to that decade. Does the fact that life has passed Trotsky's theory by for 18 years give him the right to the pretension to correct Leninism with Trotskyism?

As life has bypassed Trotsky's theory, he has tried in his little books not only to correct Leninism, but life as well, to try to prove by any means possible that

life follows Trotsky after all. But life followed Trotsky only at those moments of the revolution's worst failures. And whenever it broke free from that difficult situation, when the genuine workers' and mass peasant class movement spread, life followed not Trotsky but Lenin. This is why Trotsky had to distort the facts, this is why Trotsky, at every more or less crucial turn in the entire future history of the party, whenever he wanted to have 'his' say, he inevitably made a fool of himself.

Leninism is utterly and completely, without corrections, the theory of the proletarian revolution, and the phrase: 'I came to Lenin fighting' is an empty phrase, a hypocritical tribute to Leninism, concealing Trotsky's true thoughts. Having wandered around for a decade in Menshevik literary enterprises, the politician, washed up on Bolshevik shores by the waves of the people's revolution, joined the Bolshevik Party with the secret thought that he had been right and was still right. He did not join in order to learn from the party, but to teach the party, not to invest all his energies in the common, collective, mass work done by the workers' organisation for years and decades, but to parade before it in the role of the providential saviour. The party must prove precisely the opposite, and show not only Trotsky, but every new member, the need to 'Bolshevise Trotsky'. Has it succeeded in this?

3 **Trotsky in the Party. Our Mistakes. October According to Trotsky**

Having examined comrade Trotsky's 'trustworthy' and 'solid' road to the Bolsheviks, I now turn to comrade Trotsky's arrival in the party. We must distinguish between two aspects of Trotsky's activity. The first is when comrade Trotsky strictly and accurately carried out the directives of the party, relying on the entire collective political experience of the party, and on the entire party mass organisation, and carried out this or that task or charge of the party. At that time, comrade Trotsky did great things, at that time, side-by-side with others, he wrote glorious pages in his own history and in the history of the party. But since comrade Trotsky joined our party as an individualist who thought and still thinks that he and not the party is right about the fundamental questions of the revolution, and that Leninism must be amended with Trotskyism, a second aspect accompanies this first aspect, and it shows that comrade Trotsky is not a Bolshevik.

Four Attempts by Comrade Trotsky to Put the Party Right

The party recalls four moments when comrade Trotsky has tried to educate the party and bring his own Trotskyite deviation to its policies. The first occasion

was a few months after comrade Trotsky joined the party. It was at the time of the Brest Peace. The party knows clearly and accurately enough comrade Trotsky's position at that time. He underestimated the role of the peasantry, and hid it beneath revolutionary phrases. Comrade Trotsky wanted to correct and direct the party, beginning with his underestimation of the role of the peasantry. This was the road to defeat for the proletariat and the revolution. If we recall the arguments deployed at this time by comrade Lenin against comrade Trotsky, we see that comrade Lenin did not have to come up with any new arguments other than those he had used to reject comrade Trotsky's general position in the preceding decade. Comrade Lenin accused him of two political sins: not understanding the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry, and getting carried away by pseudo-Leftist, pseudo-revolutionary phrases. These two arguments from comrade Lenin's lips were not new arguments against comrade Trotsky, although they were not new only because the underestimation of the peasantry and the allure of revolutionary phrases in the Brest era were not new sins for comrade Trotsky. In vain do we think that there are two Trotskys: one before 1917, and the other after 1917. Earlier, comrade Trotsky served Menshevism, now he has come over to the Bolsheviks, but when he joined the party he did not consider it necessary, in the name of the general ideology of the party, to repudiate his own ideology on the basic questions of principle of the Russian Revolution. For precisely this reason, comrade Trotsky, now in the party, is systematically repeating the kinds of errors he made when he was not in the party.

At the Seventh Congress of the party, comrade Lenin stated that comrade Trotsky's policy, disguised with catchy phrases, would actually lead to the defeat of the revolution. Comrade Trotsky at the same congress tendered his declaration to leave the CC, but comrade Lenin did not give the floor to comrade Trotsky to 'correct' the party. Then came the Civil War, the era of war communism. Comrade Trotsky carried out the task charged to him. He participated less than before in the direction of the general policy of the party. But now the revolution approached a new turning point; the relations between the classes shifted. In the discussion on trade unions, the party anticipated the question raised several weeks earlier by Kronstadt, the question of the transition from war communism to the era of the New Economic Policy. What was comrade Lenin looking for at that time? He was looking for new forms of alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, new forms of leadership of the broad worker masses by the party, by using, on a broader scale, mutual methods of compulsion and of persuasion. In exactly this way, our party, led by comrade Lenin, sought and found the means to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat in the new era. Where did comrade Trotsky look for

salvation at that time? He advised us to tighten the screws of war communism. This was a repeated underestimation of the peasantry, the tendency to get carried away by external forms, methods of 'pressure' and 'administration from above'. Incapable of grasping the change in relations between the proletariat and the peasantry and the significance of this change, comrade Trotsky again recommended to the party paths and methods which would have inevitably led the dictatorship of the proletariat to failure, because it would have stumbled on the issue of the countryside. The party and comrade Lenin again refused comrade Trotsky the floor to 'correct' himself. And comrade Trotsky's further attempts, even while Vladimir Il'ich was still alive, to bring up the question of the 'plan', in comrade Trotsky's peculiar understanding, and his formulas about 'dictatorship of industry' – surely these were yet more attempts to impose with iron bonds a petty-bourgeois mentality from above? Surely this again speaks of a lack of understanding of the concrete conditions of the only possibility of realising the dictatorship in an agrarian country with a damaged industry at a moment when the international revolution has been delayed? Were these not also attempts to bypass the real difficulties of realising the dictatorship of the proletariat under the present conditions by using catchy formulas, which in fact rather than alleviating the real difficulties of the mutual relations between the proletariat and the peasantry, in fact made them worse? And here, comrade Trotsky's catchy formulas obviously conceal the feelings inevitably associated with his original theory: on the one hand, despair, pessimism, disbelief, and, on the other, exaggerated hopes for the methods of overadministration [*pere-administratsiia*] (Lenin's term), for the imperious suppression from above of real, economic difficulties.

The last discussion is still fresh in our memories. It demonstrated graphically to the party the sum total of comrade Trotsky's errors, as we saw above. But it also showed with particular clarity – over and above the errors already demonstrated earlier – yet one more feature of Trotskyism, and by no means a new one. This is the attempt to undermine and weaken the basic backbone of the dictatorship, the party. The same goal was also served by the denigration of the 'cadres', by the revived Menshevik conception of the party as a collection of groups and tendencies, and by the basically liquidationist undermining of the authority of the leading institutions ('they are leading the country to ruin!'). And surely it was under comrade Trotsky's banner that the idea grew at that time of greater freedom for extra-party organisations from the influence of the party? Has not all of this, in sum, led to a weakening of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and has it not all been based on an underestimation of the conditions under which we – in a peasant country – have to accomplish the dictatorship? Is this not a petty-bourgeois deviation?

At the moment when comrade Trotsky joined the party, he still held the deep conviction that, on the fundamental questions of the revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, he was right, not Lenin. The party does not agree. This riddle encapsulates comrade Trotsky's position within the party. So long as the party is healthy, when everything is going well, comrade Trotsky quietly carries out the work with which he is charged. But as soon as the party encounters any difficulties, as soon as the party has to adjust its rudder, then comrade Trotsky tries to parade himself in front of the party in the role of saviour and teacher, but he always points out the wrong path, because on the fundamental questions he has not assimilated Bolshevism, on the fundamental questions he continued to counterpose Trotskyism to Bolshevism. This is why both Lenin and the party have been forced to give a decisive repudiation at every turn to comrade Trotsky's attempts to set the party right. The party knew, and became more and more convinced with experience, that to act according to Trotsky meant to replace Bolshevism with Trotskyism, that all of his more or less general suggestions dealing with fundamental issues of the proletarian dictatorship, revealed the basic delusion that he had joined the party convinced that he had turned out to be right, that his, not Lenin's, evaluation of the basic forces of the revolution had been 'confirmed entirely', and that he had to 'correct' the Leninist party.

Our Mistakes

Comrade Trotsky has one more trump card in his struggle against Bolshevism. This card contains the errors of several Bolsheviks (myself and Zinoviev primarily, and also Rykov and Nogin) in October 1917. Of course, the errors of Bolsheviks are always exploited by the enemies of our party against Bolshevism. Comrade Trotsky did not play this card, which was known to the party and to comrade Trotsky himself, for the years we have been living under the October Revolution, nor did he resort to this card while he was hoping to force the party to take his path through a discussion of this or that practical question. But after four attempts – Brest, trade unions, discussion on the plan, and the recent discussion – had shown him that it would not be possible to deflect the Bolshevik Party from its path through open discussion of immediate practical questions, when at the Thirteenth Congress he saw a party which told him that we Leninists do not require our theory to be corrected by Trotskyism, then he showed this last card. He is of course not the first to do this. These errors have already been exploited repeatedly by our enemies: the greater a Bolshevik's mistakes – and the mistakes were huge, although the sharp disagreements lasted only a few days – and the more they were made by prominent Bolsheviks, and they were made by very prominent Bolsheviks – the more tempting it was for every

enemy of Bolshevism to use these mistakes to discredit Bolshevism. As soon as these mistakes were made, they were used against Bolshevism by the enemies of that time.

But both the mistakes and their exploitation were simply buried beneath the thunder of the proletarian revolution. Neither the errors themselves, nor the use made of them by hostile quarters, had any practical consequences: the proletarian mass movement in those days literally 'corrected' those vacillating Bolsheviks, confidently removing our disagreements from the stage of our enemies. They have, however, been maliciously 'utilised' against Bolshevism by all those who deserted Communism: Levi, Frossard, [Angelica] Balabanova. Not one of them, after breaking with Communism, passed up the opportunity, thereby hoping to discredit Bolshevism with the mistakes of Bolsheviks. Now after Levi and Frossard comes comrade Trotsky.

Vacillations were intolerable. Lenin armed himself against them with all the power and passion of a leader who has seen that his colleagues might confuse the ranks with their vacillations at decisive moments. He ruthlessly exposed the vacillations, and at heated and decisive moments did not shrink from the most 'severe' words or proposals. And he was right, right to the core, unconditionally. Comrade Lenin would not have been Lenin if he had stopped halfway at that moment, if he had allowed himself for whatever reason to be restrained from proposing the most extreme, far-reaching measures. And we would not have been 'Leninists' and disciples of comrade Lenin if we had doubted for a moment that those measures at that time truly derived from the situation at the time.

But when the moment for calm discussion arrived, the moment to warn against the repetition of similar mistakes in other Communist parties, Lenin provided a precise description of these mistakes. When [Giacinto] Serrati tried to conceal his own desertion from Communism with the errors of Kamenev and Zinoviev, comrade Lenin wrote: 'On the eve of the October Revolution in Russia, and immediately after it, a number of very good Communists in Russia committed an error, one which our people are now loth to recall. Why are they loth to recall it? Because, unless there is particular reason for it, it is wrong to recall mistakes which have been completely set right'.⁸⁸ Please pay attention to the way in which Lenin formulated our errors:

At the time mentioned, they [...] wavered and expressed the fear that the Bolsheviks were isolating themselves excessively, were taking too much risk in heading for an uprising, and were too 'unyielding' in their attitude

88 Lenin 1966c, p. 385.

towards a certain section of the 'Mensheviks' and 'Socialist-Revolutionaries'. The conflict became so acute that these comrades demonstratively resigned from all responsible posts in Party and government, to the great glee of the enemies of the Soviet revolution. It developed so far that the CC of our Party conducted a very heated controversy in the press with the comrades who had resigned. But a few weeks later – at most a few months – all these comrades realised their mistake and returned to their posts, some of the most responsible in the Party and the Soviets.⁸⁹

This is the accurate, clear, precise determination by Lenin of the scope of our vacillations and our disagreements with the CC.

Is Lenin's description similar to Trotsky's spiteful attempt – ridiculous in its spitefulness – to twist this into a 'right, almost Menshevik, wing' in our

89 Lenin. *Sobr. soch.*, v. XVII, p. 373. I cannot dwell here on the reconstruction of the actual picture of the October and pre-October days and Trotsky's distortions of my role in them. I will return to this in the collection of my articles and speeches for 1917, which is being readied for publication. In the meantime, I will limit myself to a few facts: in April, I openly, in accordance with the CC decree, entered into a discussion with Lenin on the pages of *Pravda*. The discussion continued at meetings of the Petrograd and All-Russian April Conferences. Already in April – after the discussion – Lenin proposed, supported, and carried through my candidacy for the CC. After the July Days, Lenin charged me in writing, in the event of some kind of misfortune befalling him, to edit and submit his unfinished manuscript: *The State and Revolution* (a representative of the 'right wing' is hardly suitable for this). On 10 October, the CC resolved the question of the insurrection. Despite disagreements, both Zinoviev and I were elected – together with Lenin, Stalin and others – to the Political Bureau, which was created at this meeting in order to lead the insurrection. On 11 October, Zinoviev and I wrote our letter. On 16 October, at a meeting of the CC, we jointly discussed once more the questions of the insurrection. On 24 October, at a meeting of the CC, I reported to the CC on several technical aspects of the preparation of the insurrection. On 25 and 26 October, I, at the behest of the CC, chaired the Second Congress of Soviets which proclaimed Soviet power. On 27 October, again in accordance with the decree of the CC, I was chosen to be the chairman of CEC. On 2 and 3 November, at the behest of the CC, I conducted negotiations in the name of the CC with representatives from other parties. On 4 November, in connection with disagreements in the CC about these negotiations, I, together with Zinoviev, Rykov, Nogin and others, resigned from the CC. On 7 November, I handed over the chairmanship of CEC to Ia. M. Sverdlov, and on 18 November I was charged by the CC to join the staff of the Brest delegation for negotiation of the peace with Germany. Those are the facts. – L.K. [original footnote]. [Lenin 1966c, p. 385. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'prominent Bolsheviks and Communists, such as Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Nogin and Milyutin'].

Bolshevik Party? For the sake of his own theory about 'anti-revolutionary aspects' of Leninism, and in order to discredit the idea of Leninism, Trotsky was obliged to create inside Bolshevism a 'right wing' with an almost Menshevik deviation! How well this proved the need to use Trotskyism to cure Leninism and the Leninists! How this would help the distribution of ideas so dear to Trotsky about the rebirth of cadres! How could the mistakes of Kamenev and Zinoviev not be utilised in the service of these 'worthy' goals? Truly, and here Lenin and his oeuvre get in the way a little, such is the fate of comrade Trotsky: to achieve his goals, he must 'overcome' Lenin, Leninism and the Leninists by any means possible.

Trotsky Again on Himself and on Lenin

Were we the only ones, in Trotsky's view, who made mistakes at the moment of the October Revolution? No, we were not the only ones. There was one other Bolshevik who made grave mistakes at the moment of October. Indeed, is comrade Trotsky's book intended as a warning against the mistakes of Kamenev and Zinoviev? Alas, comrade Trotsky takes further aim, or rather, he pushes on in order to provide an elucidation that is most beneficial to him. How does Trotsky describe October?

This little book contains many sensational things. But arguably the most sensational thing is the phrase in this little book that refers precisely to the October Revolution. On page 50 of his *Lessons*, Trotsky writes: 'The insurrection of 25 October was merely a supplement to this'.⁹⁰ There are probably many present here who participated in the October events, and I think that they would all be surprised to learn eight years after 25 October 1917 that the insurrection of 25 October was 'supplementary in character'. What did it supplement? Apparently, it 'supplemented' the events that took place on 9 October. We know the main dates of the revolution. But if I say the 'events of 9 October', many will ask what happened on 9 October, for which the October insurrection was but a supplement? On 9 October – Trotsky's book talks about this – a resolution was passed in the Petrograd Soviet, on comrade Trotsky's motion, that ended with the following phrase: 'The Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies bears no responsibility to the army for such a strategy on the part of the Provisional Government, and especially for the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd'.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 122.

⁹¹ Cf. Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 122–23. For the original resolution, see 'Proekt rezoliutsii bol'shevikov', in *Petrogradskii soviet* 2003, p. 478.

This was, of course, an important resolution; it united the garrison, which did not want to go to the front, with the Petrograd Soviet. In that cause, which Lenin, after Marx, called the 'art of insurrection', the establishment of ties between the Soviet and the Petrograd garrison played a large role. But listen to how Trotsky describes and assesses that moment (9 October): 'From this moment (9 October) ... we were in fact already in a state of armed insurrection ... The outcome of the insurrection of 25 October was already three-quarters settled, if not more, at the moment ... In essence, we had here an armed insurrection ... [We had a] "silent", almost "legal" armed insurrection [...] [which] was three-quarters, if not nine-tenths, a reality ... [From this moment onwards] we had a victorious insurrection in the capital' (L. Trotskii, *Uroki Oktiabria*, 1917, pp. 59–60).⁹² It turns out that 25 October was in reality only a small, supplementary footnote to what happened on 9 October, when 'we had' not only three-quarters already resolved, but in fact a state of armed insurrection, whereby the insurrection was 'silent' and almost 'legal', although victorious. But now the question arises: If the 'victorious' insurrection was already nine-tenths accomplished in reality on 9 October, how are we to evaluate the mental abilities of those who sat on the Bolshevik CC and, on 10 October, engaged in a heated debate about whether to proceed to an insurrection or not, and if so, when? What are we to think about people who, on 16 October in the name of the CC, gathered together with local party officials, with officials of military organisations, and yet were still weighing the chances of the insurrection, the forces of the insurrection, and the timing of the insurrection? After all, it turns out that it had already been arranged on 9 October 'silently' and 'legally' and so silently that neither the party nor the CC knew anything about it. But this is neither here nor there. What is the party, the PK, the CC, when Trotsky contrives to write a history of the October Revolution in which neither the party nor the PK really exist as genuine, living forces, as collective organisers of the mass movement! And there is nothing to be learnt in 'The Lessons of October' about what was happening in Moscow, or that not only in Petrograd but also in Moscow and Ivanovo-Voznesensk there was a proletariat that was doing something or other. Of course, it is necessary to know how to write the history of October, but comrade Trotsky is a very wily, brilliant publicist – he can write like that. Let us leave aside the CC, the PK, and the military organisation. What about Lenin? As far as Lenin is concerned, comrade Trotsky informs us on the very same page: 'Lenin, who was not in Petrograd, did not appreciate the full significance of this fact ... [Lenin was unable], from the underground, to assess the

92 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 123.

radical shift', etc. (L. Trotskii 1917, *Uroki Oktiabria*, pp. 59–60).⁹³ See how ignorant we all are about the October Revolution! Up to now we had imagined that Lenin had led the October Revolution, and that the CC, PK, military organisation, and the party had organised it ... But it turns out that neither the CC, nor the PK played any role in it whatsoever. They were not even on the scene. Perhaps Trotsky, carrying out the resolution on 9 October, was acting according to the directives of the central leadership which had prepared the insurrection? Such a leadership existed, but nothing is known about it from Trotsky's *Lessons*. On the scene is Trotsky who 'legally' and 'silently' decided the victorious insurrection of 9 October, at the same time as the CC, made up of some not very bright people, was still discussing the question: is an insurrection necessary? It turns out, furthermore, that Lenin was in the underground, did not understand the situation, and did not know the correlation of forces ... but not only this: not understanding and not knowing the situation, Lenin – Trotsky informs us – gave advice: advice to start the revolution in Moscow.

To more fully explain Lenin's role, Trotsky reports as follows:

'If the insurrection had started in Moscow, before the overthrow in Petrograd, it would inevitably have been more protracted, and the outcome highly uncertain. Failure in Moscow would have had a grave effect on Petrograd' (L. Trotskii, *Uroki Oktiabria*, p. 60).⁹⁴

While Lenin is imparting this kind of 'advice', Trotsky, with his 'silent' but 'victorious' insurrection in his pocket, executes a 'broad, all-encompassing manoeuvre'. 'We managed', he writes triumphantly, 'to lure our enemies into the trap of Soviet legality' ... 'Our 'cunning' proved one hundred percent successful' ... 'The conciliationists 'turned out to have been caught' hook, line and sinker', by Trotsky.⁹⁵

It is true that Lenin, having in mind precisely Trotsky's attraction to this 'broad, all-encompassing manoeuvre', and counting far more on the workers, sailors, and soldiers than on comrade Trotsky's 'cunning', wrote at that time: 'Delay is criminal. To wait for the Congress of Soviets would be a childish game of formalities, [...] and a betrayal of the revolution'.⁹⁶ But Trotsky, concluding the description of his own role and of Lenin's role in the October days, 'triumphantly' refutes Lenin's words: 'It is one thing to organise an armed insurrection under the naked slogan of the seizure of power by the party',

93 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 122.

94 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 122.

95 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 126, 123, 126.

96 Lenin 1964, p. 141. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'a disgraceful game of formalities'.

Trotsky instructs Lenin, 'but quite another to prepare and then carry out an insurrection under the slogan of defending the rights of the Congress of Soviets'.⁹⁷

This is the state of play: Lenin is in the underground, unable to evaluate the situation, unable to grasp that nine-tenths of the insurrection has already been achieved, and advises starting the insurrection in Moscow, clearly condemning the revolution to failure. He worries, and leads the cause under the clearly ridiculous, down-to-earth 'naked slogan of the seizure of power by the party' (by the way, this was an old accusation against Lenin by literally all the Mensheviks and Trotsky). Trotsky, on the other hand, has already arranged the 'victorious insurrection' by 9 October, firmly but consistently carries out a 'broad, all-encompassing manoeuvre', 'lures the enemies into a trap', and prepares and later accomplishes victory under the slogan 'Defence of the Rights of the Congress of Soviets', a slogan comprehensible to the broad masses. Who made the insurrection, who led it, who determined its course, who saved the October Revolution? Trotsky is a very good man of letters, but however skilful comrade Trotsky's pen is, it is impossible to miss the thinking behind his tale of October. The CC was in a quagmire, the PK did not exist in the world, comrade Trotsky, as the chairman of the Soviet, connected the garrison with the Soviet through his own policies, cleverly manoeuvring, and leaving to 25 October the task of several supplementary steps in order to hand the proletariat an intelligently and subtly prepared victory. Lenin however sits in the underground the whole time, not grasping the situation, and giving advice to launch the insurrection in Moscow, getting excited and boiling over so that the already completed insurrection is delayed and pushed aside in favour of a naked 'seizure of power by the party'.

So what do 'The Lessons of October' tell us? That in the spring Lenin had to ideologically re-arm, discard his old theory, and take up weapons from Trotsky's arsenal, and that in October he tried unsuccessfully to lead the insurrection, which comrade Trotsky was destined to lead to victory.

We have to choose what we have to learn and what we have to teach – either this history of Trotsky's, or the history as it is presented in the works of comrade Lenin.

I already said at the outset that I cannot analyse the individual mistakes of Trotsky. Enough has already been said. I will not broach the distortions of events in connection with the April Conference, or the distortion of events in connection with the Democratic Conference, but I will point out only two areas

97 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 124.

in order to show that the experienced politician and man-of-letters comrade Trotsky is really wide of the mark with his attacks.

Let us take the question of the Constituent Assembly. Comrade Trotsky quotes my and Zinoviev's letter from 11 October. We wrote: 'The Soviets, having taken root in life, will not be able to be destroyed ... The Constituent Assembly will be able to rely only on the Soviets in their revolutionary work. The Constituent Assembly and the Soviets is a combined type of state institutions, towards which we are advancing'.⁹⁸

We wrote this on 11 October. Trotsky commented as follows: 'It is extremely interesting to note in this characterisation of the overall course taken by the right that the theory of "combined" statehood [*kombinirovannai gosudarstvennost'*], combining the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets, was repeated one and a half to two years later in Germany by Rudolf Hilferding, who was also fighting against a seizure of power by the proletariat' (L. Trotskii, 1917, *Uroki Oktiabria*, p. 37).⁹⁹

Well, what can be more convincing than that? We wrote about the 'combined type of the Constituent Assembly and the Soviets', and, a year and a half later, Hilferding repeated this – and comrade Trotsky used this example to state that these people, he said, were like Hilferding, and were 'also fighting against the seizure of power by the proletariat'. But the method used here by the author is quite shameful.

My and Zinoviev's letter was written on 11 October; let's take Lenin's article, written on 6 October, i.e. five days before our letter. This is what Lenin wrote: 'During the transition from the old to the new there may be temporary "combined types" (as *Rabochy Put* correctly pointed out a day or two ago) – for instance, a Soviet Republic together with a Constituent Assembly' (*Sobr. soch. Lenina*, v. XIV, p. 167).¹⁰⁰

What does this imply? It implies that, in this case, Lenin too resembled this Hilferding, and either we had to divorce ourselves from Hilferding, or Lenin had to marry Hilferding. But this does not imply that Lenin will marry Hilferding, but fools can be found who believe that Kamenev and Zinoviev would perhaps join up with Hilferding. But let's leave Kamenev and Zinoviev aside. What about Lenin? After all, it remains that Trotsky placed the social traitor Hilferding close to Lenin, in order to more readily get what he wanted, but what he did not know how to get. Historical truth is not important to Trotsky. He has no interest in

98 'K tekushchemu momentu', in *Protokoly* 1958, p. 88.

99 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 110–11.

100 The article, to which Lenin was referring, was written by comrade Zinoviev [original footnote]. [Lenin 1964q, p. 172].

modifying his tactics when the situation is changing from day to day – he is interested only in discrediting Bolshevism by any means possible.

A final example, again in brief. In this same letter of October 1917, we said: 'The soldiers support us not for our slogan of war, but for our slogan of peace ... If we, having taken power on our own, find it necessary, by virtue of the whole world situation, to wage revolutionary war, then the mass of the soldiers will abandon us. Of course, the best part of the young soldiers will stay with us, but the mass of soldiers will go' (L. Trotskii, 1917, *Uroki Oktiabria*, p. 38).¹⁰¹ Let the historian evaluate the inaccuracy of this judgement. But what does comrade Trotsky do? 'We see here', he says, 'the basic reasons used to justify the signing of the peace of Brest-Litovsk'.¹⁰² Thus, in the case of the Brest-Litovsk peace, signed by the party at the urging, the steely pressure of Lenin and against Trotsky's wishes, it turns out that the 'basic reasons' were supplied by our 'rightists', our 'Hilferdingists'. This is how the history of Brest-Litovsk has been presented. But this is an attack not only on us, but also on Lenin. Is it any wonder after this that our enemies, who have a very sensitive nose for any dirt, write that with regard to several booklets about Lenin it is hard to say whether they have been written by a colleague or a rival of Lenin?

Leninism against Trotskyism

The results may now be summed up, and a general idea given of this work by comrade Trotsky. Of course, it is a continuation of all prior works. The party resolutely rebuffed his attempts to deflect the party from the political line of Bolshevism and towards the political line of Trotskyism, and Trotsky resorted to his final deadly weapon.

We are the monopoly party in the country, and we bring together everything that is organised in the country, but we must not forget for a moment that we are surrounded by elements which are foreign to our class, that these elemental forces will not decline, but will grow, will become politically more sensitive. They have no legal form of organisation. The petty-bourgeois intelligentsia will also grow on the basis of industry, factories, plants and trade. All of these petty-bourgeois elements, unable to find any means of open expression in any social organisation [*obshchestvennaia organizatsiia*], will inevitably endeavour to break through, to further their aims through our own party. Of course, while exerting their pressure on our party, the petty-bourgeois elements will seek out its weakest link, and the weakest link will of course be found wherever people

101 Cited in Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 111–112.

102 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 112.

have joined the party without assimilating into it, and wherever they harbour the secret belief, which makes them restless, that they are more in the right than the party is, and that it is only the narrow-mindedness, the conservatism, the traditions, championed by one or another clique, that stop the party from learning from the 'true' saviours of the party, such as Trotsky.

I say this with regret, and the entire party echoes this regret, but it has to be said: Comrade Trotsky has become the channel through which the petty-bourgeois elements find their way into our party. The entire tenor of his speeches, his entire historical past, show this to be true. In his struggle against the party, he has already become a symbol in the country for everything that is directed against our party. Above all, comrade Trotsky himself needs to realise this. If he understands this and draws the necessary conclusions, then everything can be put right. Whether he wants to or not (and he probably does not want to), he has become, for all who see Communism as their greatest enemy, the symbol of emancipation from the thrall of the Communist Party. This is the sad, but completely inevitable, conclusion for everyone who is used to judging political events not from the viewpoint of gossip, but from the viewpoint of actual analysis of class relations. Before us is a comrade with a twenty-year history, who has not long been in the party, but who joined the party without repudiating his errors, who tried to advance his own viewpoint inside the party at every turn, who created in the party such an attitude to him, that the party was forced repeatedly to call him to order. And of course, for those petty-bourgeois elements which wanted to find their own banner, this political figure, who systematically undermined the authority of Bolshevism, the authority of Lenin – became a symbol of hope as well.

This was the ideological danger comrade Trotsky presented to us, and which we could not ignore. I know that in Moscow, a city especially susceptible to all kinds of rumours, 'perfectly reliable' information is being spread, firstly, that comrade Trotsky's pamphlet has been banned, that comrade Trotsky has already been expelled from the party, that Trotsky's exclusion from the party is being considered, and that Trotsky is not even in Moscow any longer. This is, of course, all gossip. It has not entered anybody's mind to ban comrade Trotsky's pamphlet. Not one member of the CC has raised, or intends to raise, the question of any party punishment [*partinye repressiia*] against comrade Trotsky. Punishment, expulsion, etc. would not help to explain anything, but, on the contrary, would make explanation more difficult, and would, at the same time, give trouble-makers the change to sow the seeds of schism in the party, and prevent any explanation of the difference between the real principles of Bolshevism and Trotskyism. And that is fundamental now. We must take all measures to protect against infection with these non-Bolshevik teachings

those strata of the party on which it is counting, and in particular our younger generation, the future cadres, which must seize hold of the party's destiny. And, therefore, one of the urgent tasks of our party is to explain at every opportunity the incorrectness of comrade Trotsky's position, explain the need to choose between Trotskyism and Leninism, and explain the impossibility of combining the one with the other. It must be perfectly clear to every conscious member of the party that there is Trotskyism and there is Leninism, and that for us, Bolsheviks, and for the international proletariat marching to victory, Leninism is enough, and there is no need to substitute or 'correct' Leninism with Trotskyism. (Thunderous applause).

“Trotskyism or Leninism?”¹

I. Stalin

Speech to the Plenum of the Communist Group in the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions [VTsSPS], November 19, 1924.

Comrades! After Comrade Kamenev's comprehensive report there is little left for me to say. I shall therefore confine myself to exposing certain legends that are being spread by Comrade Trotsky and his supporters about the October uprising, about Comrade Trotsky's role in the uprising, about the Party and the preparation for October, and so forth. I shall also touch upon Trotskyism as a unique ideology that is incompatible with Leninism, and upon the Party's tasks in connection with Comrade Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements.

The Facts of the October Uprising

First of all about the October uprising. Rumours are being vigorously spread among members of the Party that the Central Committee as a whole was opposed to an uprising in October 1917. The usual story is that on 10 October, when the Central Committee adopted the decision to organise the uprising, the majority of the Central Committee at first spoke against an uprising, but, so the story runs, at that moment a worker burst in on the meeting of the Central Committee and said: 'You are deciding against an uprising, but I tell you that there will be an uprising all the same, in spite of everything'. And so, after that threat, the story runs, the Central Committee, which is alleged to have become frightened, raised the question of an uprising afresh and adopted a decision to organise it. This is not merely a rumour, comrades. It is related by the well-known John Reed in his book *Ten Days*. Reed was remote from our Party and, of course, could not know the history of our secret meeting on 10 October, and, consequently, he was taken in by the gossip spread by people like Sukhanov. This story was later passed round and repeated in a number

1 I. Stalin, "Trotskizm ili Leninizm?", *Pravda*, no. 269, 26 November 1924, pp. 6–7; published simultaneously in *Izvestiia*, no. 270, 26 November 1924, pp. 6–7. I have used the translation from Stalin 1953b [from the online version at http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1924/11_19.htm].

of pamphlets written by Trotskyists, including one of the latest pamphlets on October written by Comrade Syrkin. These rumours have been strongly supported in Comrade Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements. It scarcely needs proof that all these and similar 'Arabian Nights' fairy tales are not in accordance with the truth, that in fact nothing of the kind happened, nor could have happened, at the meeting of the Central Committee. Consequently, we could ignore these absurd rumours; after all, lots of rumours are fabricated in the office rooms of the oppositionists or those who are remote from the Party. Indeed, we have ignored them till now; for example, we paid no attention to John Reed's mistakes and did not take the trouble to rectify them. After Comrade Trotsky's latest pronouncements, however, it is no longer possible to ignore such legends, for attempts are being made now to bring up our young people on them and, unfortunately, some results have already been achieved in this respect. In view of this, I must counter these absurd rumours with the actual facts. I take the minutes of the meeting of the Central Committee of our Party on 10 (23) October 1917. Present: Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin, Trotsky, Sverdlov, Uritskii, Dzerzhinsky, Kollontai, Bubnov, Sokol'nikov, [Georgii] Lomov. The question of the current situation and the uprising was discussed. After the discussion, Comrade Lenin's resolution on the uprising was put to the vote. The resolution was adopted by a majority of 10 against 2. Clear, one would think: by a majority of 10 against 2, the Central Committee decided to proceed with the immediate, practical work of organising the uprising. At this very same meeting the Central Committee elected a political centre to direct the uprising; this centre, called the Political Bureau, consisted of Lenin, Zinoviev, Stalin, Kamenev, Trotsky, Sokol'nikov and Bubnov.

Such are the facts.

These minutes at one stroke destroy several legends. They destroy the legend that the majority on the Central Committee was opposed to an uprising. They also destroy the legend that on the question of the uprising the Central Committee was on the verge of a split. It is clear from the minutes that the opponents of an immediate uprising – Kamenev and Zinoviev – were elected to the body that was to exercise political direction of the uprising on a par with those who were in favour of an uprising. There was no question of a split, nor could there be.

Comrade Trotsky asserts that in October our Party had a right wing in the persons of Kamenev and Zinoviev, who, he says, were almost Social Democrats. What one cannot understand then is how, under those circumstances, it could happen that the Party avoided a split; how it could happen that the disagreements with comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev lasted only a few days; how could it happen that, in spite of those disagreements, the Party appointed these

comrades to highly important posts, elected them to the political centre of the uprising, and so forth? Lenin's implacable attitude towards Social-Democrats is sufficiently well-known in the Party; the Party knows that Lenin would not for a single moment have agreed to have Social-Democratically-minded comrades in the Party, let alone in highly important posts. How, then, are we to explain the fact that the Party avoided a split? The explanation is that in spite of the disagreements, these comrades were Old Bolsheviks who stood on the common ground of Bolshevism. What was that common ground? Unity of views on the fundamental questions: the character of the Russian revolution, the driving forces of the revolution, the role of the peasantry, the principles of Party leadership, and so forth. Had there not been this common ground, a split would have been inevitable. There was no split, and the disagreements lasted only a few days, because, and only because, comrades Kamenev and Zinoviev were Leninists, Bolsheviks.

Let us now pass to the legend about comrade Trotsky's special role in the October uprising. The Trotskyists are vigorously spreading rumours that comrade Trotsky inspired and was the sole leader of the October uprising. These rumours are being spread with exceptional zeal by the so-called editor of comrade Trotsky's works, comrade Lentsner. Comrade Trotsky himself, by consistently avoiding mention of the Party, the Central Committee and the Leningrad² Committee of the Party, by saying nothing about the leading role of these organisation, in the uprising and vigorously pushing himself forward as the central figure in the October uprising, voluntarily or involuntarily helps to spread the rumours about the special role he is supposed to have played in the uprising. I am far from denying comrade Trotsky's undoubtedly important role in the uprising. I must say, however, that comrade Trotsky did not play any special role in the October uprising, nor could he do so; being chairman of the Petrograd Soviet, he merely carried out the will of the appropriate Party bodies, which directed every step that comrade Trotsky took. To philistines like Sukhanov, all this may seem strange, but the facts, the true facts, wholly and fully confirm what I say.

Let us take the minutes of the next meeting of the Central Committee, the one held on 16 October 1917. Present: the members of the Central Committee, plus representatives of the Leningrad Committee, plus representatives of the military organisation, factory committees, trade unions and the rail-

2 In the original article which appeared in *Pravda*, Stalin refers almost throughout to 'Leningrad' (the city's name by the time of the 'literary discussion', rather than the more appropriate 'Petrograd', its name in 1917). I have translated according to the original usage.

waymen. Among those present, besides the members of the Central Committee, were: [Nikolai] Krylenko, [Aleksandr] Shotman, Kalinin, [V.] Volodarsky, Shlyapnikov, [Martyn] Latsis, and others, 25 in all. The question of the uprising was discussed from the purely practical-organisational aspect. Lenin's resolution on the uprising was adopted by a majority of 20 against 2, three abstaining. A practical centre was elected for the organisational leadership of the uprising. Who was elected to this centre? The following five: Sverdlov, Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, Bubnov, Uritskii. The functions of the practical centre: to direct all the practical organs of the uprising in conformity with the directives of the Central Committee. Thus, as you see, something 'terrible' happened at this meeting of the Central Committee, i.e. 'strange to relate', the 'inspirer', the 'chief figure', the 'sole leader' of the uprising, comrade Trotsky, was not elected to the practical centre, which was called upon to direct the uprising. How is this to be reconciled with the current opinion about comrade Trotsky's special role? Is not all this somewhat 'strange', as Sukhanov, or as the Trotskyists, would say? And yet, strictly speaking, there is nothing strange about it, for neither in the Party, nor in the October uprising, did comrade Trotsky play any special role, nor could he do so, for he was a relatively new man in our party in the period of October. He, like all the responsible party workers, merely carried out the will of the Central Committee and of its organs. Whoever is familiar with the mechanics of Bolshevik Party leadership will have no difficulty in understanding that it could not be otherwise: it would have been enough for comrade Trotsky to have gone against the will of the Central Committee to have been deprived of influence on the course of events. This talk about comrade Trotsky's special role is a legend that is being spread by obliging 'Party' gossips.

This, of course, does not mean that the October uprising did not have its inspirer. It did have its inspirer and leader, but this was Lenin, and none other than Lenin, that same Lenin whose resolutions the Central Committee adopted when deciding the question of the uprising, that same Lenin who, in spite of what comrade Trotsky says, was not prevented by being in hiding from being the actual inspirer of the uprising. It is foolish and ridiculous to attempt now, by gossip about Lenin having been in hiding, to obscure the indubitable fact that the inspirer of the uprising was the leader of the Party, V.I. Lenin.

Such are the facts.

Granted, we are told, but it cannot be denied that comrade Trotsky fought well in the period of October. Yes, that is true, comrade Trotsky did, indeed, fight well in October; but comrade Trotsky was not the only one who fought well in the period of October. Even people like the Left SRs, who then stood side by side with the Bolsheviks, also fought well. In general, I must say that in the period of a victorious uprising, when the enemy is isolated and the uprising is

growing, it is not difficult to fight well. At such moments even backward people become heroes. The proletarian struggle is not, however, an uninterrupted advance, an unbroken chain of victories. The proletarian struggle also has its trials, its defeats. The genuine revolutionary is not one who displays courage in the period of a victorious uprising, but one who, while fighting well during the victorious advance of the revolution, also displays courage when the revolution is in retreat, when the proletariat suffers defeat; who does not lose his head and does not drift along on the current when the revolution suffers reverses, when the enemy achieves success; who does not become panic-stricken or give way to despair when the revolution is in a period of retreat. The Left SRs did not fight badly in the period of October, and they supported the Bolsheviks. But who does not know that those 'brave' fighters became panic-stricken in the period of Brest, when the advance of German imperialism drove them to despair and hysteria. It is a very sad but indubitable fact that comrade Trotsky, who fought well in the period of October, did not, in the period of Brest, in the period when the revolution suffered temporary reverses, possess the courage to display sufficient staunchness at that difficult moment and to refrain from following in the footsteps of the Left SRs. Beyond question, that moment was a difficult one; one had to display exceptional courage and imperturbable coolness not to be dismayed, to retreat in good time, to accept peace in good time, to withdraw the proletarian army out of range of the blows of German imperialism, to preserve the peasant reserves and, after obtaining a respite in this way, to strike at the enemy with renewed force. Unfortunately, comrade Trotsky was found to lack this courage and revolutionary staunchness at that difficult moment. In comrade Trotsky's opinion, the principal lesson of the proletarian revolution is 'not to drift along on the current' during October. That is wrong, for comrade Trotsky's assertion contains only a particle of the truth about the lessons of the revolution. The whole truth about the lessons of the proletarian revolution is 'not to funk' not only when the revolution is advancing, but also when it is in retreat, when the enemy is gaining the upper hand and the revolution is suffering reverses. The revolution did not end with October. October was only the beginning of the proletarian revolution. It is bad to drift along on the current when the tide of insurrection is rising; but it is worse to drift along on the current when the revolution is passing through severe trials after power has been captured. To retain power on the day after the revolution is no less important than to capture power. If comrade Trotsky drifted along during the period of Brest, when our revolution was passing through severe trials, when it was almost a matter of surrendering power, he ought to know that the mistakes committed by Kamenev and Zinoviev in October are quite irrelevant here.

That is how things stand with the legends of the October uprising.

That is how matters stand with the legends about the October uprising.

Let us now pass to the question of the preparation for October.

Listening to comrade Trotsky, one might think that during the whole of the period of preparation, from March to October, the Bolshevik Party did nothing but mark time; that it was being corroded by internal contradictions and hindered Lenin in every way; that, had it not been for comrade Trotsky, nobody knows how the October Revolution would have ended. It is rather amusing to hear this strange talk about the Party from comrade Trotsky, who declares in this same 'preface' to Volume III that 'the chief instrument of the proletarian revolution is a party', that 'without a party, separately from a party, bypassing a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot triumph'.³ Allah himself would not understand how our revolution could have succeeded if 'its chief instrument' proved to be useless, while success was impossible, as it appears, 'bypassing a party'. But this is not the first time that comrade Trotsky treats us to oddities. It must be supposed that this amusing talk about our Party is one of comrade Trotsky's usual oddities.

Let us briefly review the history of the preparation for October according to periods.

1) The period of the Party's new orientation (March–April). The major facts of this period: a) the overthrow of tsarism; b) the formation of the Provisional Government (dictatorship of the bourgeoisie); c) the appearance of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies (dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry); d) dual power; e) the April demonstration; f) the first crisis of power.

The characteristic feature of this period is the fact that there existed together, side by side and simultaneously, both the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry; the latter trusts the former, believes that it is striving for peace, voluntarily surrenders power to the bourgeoisie and thereby becomes an appendage of the bourgeoisie. There are as yet no serious conflicts between the two dictatorships. On the other hand, there is the 'Contact Commission'.

This was the greatest turning point in the history of Russia and an unprecedented turning point in the history of our Party. The old, pre-revolutionary platform of direct overthrow of the government was clear and definite, but it was no longer suitable for the new conditions of the struggle. It was now no longer possible to go all out to overthrow [*sverzhenie*] the government, for the latter was connected with the Soviets, then under the influence of the defencists, and the Party would have had to wage war against both the government

3 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 132.

and the Soviets, a war that would have been beyond its strength. Nor was it possible to pursue a policy of supporting the Provisional Government, for it was the government of imperialism. Under the new conditions of the struggle, the Party had to adopt a new orientation. The Party (its majority) groped its way towards this new orientation. It adopted the policy of pressure on the Provisional Government through the Soviets on the question of peace and did not venture to step forward at once from the old slogan of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry to the new slogan of power to the Soviets. The aim of this halfway policy was to enable the Soviets to discern the actual imperialist nature of the Provisional Government on the basis of the concrete questions of peace, and in this way to wrest the Soviets from the Provisional Government. But this was a profoundly mistaken position, for it gave rise to pacifist illusions, brought grist to the mill of defencism and hindered the revolutionary education of the masses. At that time I shared this mistaken position with other Party comrades and fully abandoned it only in the middle of April, when I associated myself with Lenin's theses.⁴ A new orientation was needed. This new orientation was given to the Party by Lenin, in his celebrated April Theses.⁵ I shall not deal with these theses, for they are known to everybody. Were there any disagreements between the Party and Lenin at that time? Yes, there were. How long did these disagreements last? Not more than two weeks. The City Conference of the Leningrad organisation [3] (in the latter half of April), which adopted Lenin's theses, marked a turning point in our Party's development. The All-Russian April Conference (at the end of April) merely completed on an all-Russian scale the work of the Leningrad Conference, rallying nine-tenths of the Party around this united Party position.

Now, seven years later, comrade Trotsky gloats maliciously over the past disagreements among the Bolsheviks and depicts them as a struggle waged as if there were almost two parties within Bolshevism. But, firstly, comrade Trotsky disgracefully exaggerates and inflates the matter, for the Bolshevik Party lived through these disagreements without the slightest shock. Secondly, our Party would be a caste and not a revolutionary party if it did not permit different shades of opinion in its ranks. Moreover, it is well-known that there were disagreements among us even before that, for example, in the period of the Third Duma, but they did not shake the unity of our Party. Thirdly, it will not be out of place to ask what was then the position of comrade Trotsky himself, who is now

4 It is well-known that Comrade Zinoviev, whom Comrade Trotsky was ready to turn into a 'Hilferdingist', shared Lenin's viewpoint completely and utterly [original footnote].

5 Lenin 1964d, pp. 19–26.

gloating so eagerly over the past disagreements among the Bolsheviks. Lentsner, the so-called editor of Trotsky's works, assures us that Trotsky's letters from America (March) 'wholly anticipated' Lenin's *Letters From Afar* [5] (March),⁶ which served as the basis of Lenin's April Theses.⁷ That is what he says: 'wholly anticipated'. Comrade Trotsky does not object to this analogy; apparently, he accepts it with thanks. But, firstly, comrade Trotsky's letters 'do not in the least resemble' Lenin's letters either in spirit or in conclusions, for they wholly and entirely reflect comrade Trotsky's anti-Bolshevik slogan of 'no tsar, but a workers' government', a slogan which implies a revolution without the peasantry. It is enough to glance through these two series of letters to be convinced of this. Secondly, how are we to explain the fact that Lenin on the very next day after his arrival from abroad considered it necessary to dissociate himself from comrade Trotsky? Who does not know of Lenin's repeated statements that comrade Trotsky's slogan: 'no tsar, but a workers' government' was an attempt 'to skip the still unexhausted peasant movement', that this slogan meant 'playing at the seizure of power by a workers' government'?⁸ What can there be in common between Lenin's Bolshevik theses and comrade Trotsky's anti-Bolshevik scheme with its 'playing at the seizure of power'? And what prompts this passion that some people display for comparing a wretched hovel with Mont Blanc? For what purpose did comrade Lentsner find it necessary to make this risky addition to the heap of old legends about our revolution of still another legend, about Trotsky's letters from America 'anticipating' Lenin's well-known *Letters From Afar*?⁹ No wonder it is said that an obliging fool is more dangerous than an enemy.

6 Lenin 1964c, pp. 295–342.

7 Trotskii 1924e, pp. 370–2, n. 28.

8 See Lenin's *Soch.*, Vol. XIV, pp. 31–2 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1964b, p. 48]. See also the reports made at the Petrograd City Conference and at the All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) (middle and end of April 1917) [original footnote]. [*Petrogradskaia Obshchegorodskaia* 1925].

9 Among these legends must be included also the very widespread story that comrade Trotsky was the 'sole' or 'chief organiser' of the victories on the fronts of the civil war. I must declare, comrades, in the interest of truth, that this version is quite out of accord with the facts. I am far from denying that comrade Trotsky played an important role in the civil war. But I must emphatically declare that the high honour of being the organiser of our victories belongs not to individuals, but to the great collective body of advanced workers in our country, the Russian Communist Party. Perhaps it will not be out of place to quote a few examples. You know that [Aleksandr] Kolchak and [Anton] Denikin were regarded as the principal enemies of the Soviet Republic. You know that our country breathed freely only after those enemies

2) The period of the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses (May–August). The major facts of this period: a) the April demonstration in Leningrad and the formation of the coalition government with the participation of ‘socialists’; b) the May Day demonstrations in the principal centres of Russia with the slogan of ‘a democratic peace’; c) the June demonstration in Leningrad with the principal slogan: ‘Down with the capitalist ministers!’; d) the June offensive at the front and the reverses of the Russian army; e) the July armed demonstration in Leningrad; the Cadet ministers resign from the government; f) counter-revolutionary troops are called in from the front; the editorial offices of *Pravda* are wrecked; the counter-revolution launches a struggle against the Soviets and a new coalition government is formed, headed by Kerensky; g) the Sixth Congress of our Party, which issues the slogan to prepare for an armed uprising; h) the counter-revolutionary State Conference and the general strike in Moscow; i) Kornilov’s unsuccessful march on Leningrad, the revitalising of the Soviets; the Cadets resign and a ‘Directory’ is formed.

were defeated. Well, history shows that both those enemies, i.e. Kolchak and Denikin, were routed by our troops in spite of comrade Trotsky’s plans.

Judge for yourselves.

1) Kolchak. This is in the summer of 1919. Our troops are advancing against Kolchak and are operating near Ufa. A meeting of the Central Committee is held. Comrade Trotsky proposes that the advance be halted along the line of the River Belaia (near Ufa), leaving the Urals in the hands of Kolchak, and that part of the troops be withdrawn from the Eastern Front and transferred to the Southern Front. A heated debate takes place. The Central Committee disagrees with comrade Trotsky, being of the opinion that the Urals, with its factories and railway network, must not be left in the hands of Kolchak, for the latter could easily recuperate there, organise a strong force and reach the Volga again; Kolchak must first be driven beyond the Ural range into the Siberian steppes, and only after that has been done should forces be transferred to the South. The Central Committee rejects Trotsky’s plan. Comrade Trotsky hands in his resignation. The Central Committee refuses to accept it. Commander-in-Chief Vatsetis, who supported comrade Trotsky’s plan, resigns. His place is taken by a new Commander-in-Chief, comrade Kamenev. From that moment comrade Trotsky ceases to take a direct part in the affairs of the Eastern Front.

2) Denikin. This is in the autumn of 1919. The offensive against Denikin is not proceeding successfully. The ‘steel ring’ around [Konstantin] Mamontov (Mamontov’s raid) is obviously collapsing. Denikin captures Kursk. Denikin is approaching Orel. Comrade Trotsky is summoned from the Southern Front to attend a meeting of the Central Committee. The Central Committee regards the situation as alarming and decides to send new military leaders to the Southern Front and to withdraw comrade Trotsky. The new military leaders demand ‘no intervention’ by comrade Trotsky in the affairs of the Southern Front. Trotsky ceases to take a direct part in the affairs of the Southern Front. Operations on the Southern Front, right up to the capture of Rostov-on-Don and Odessa by our troops, proceed without comrade Trotsky.

Let anybody try to refute these facts [original footnote].

The characteristic feature of this period is the intensification of the crisis and the upsetting of the unstable equilibrium between the Soviets and the Provisional Government which, for good or evil, had existed in the preceding period. Dual power has become intolerable for both sides. The fragile edifice of the 'Contact Commission' is tottering. 'Crisis of power' and 'ministerial re-shuffle' are the most fashionable catchwords of the day. The crisis at the front and the disruption in the rear are doing their work, strengthening the extreme flanks and squeezing the defencist compromisers from both sides. The revolution is mobilising, causing the mobilisation of the counter-revolution. The counter-revolution, in its turn, is spurring on the revolution, stirring up new waves of the revolutionary tide. The question of transferring power to the new class becomes the immediate question of the day.

Were there disagreements in our Party then? Yes, there were. They were, however, of a purely practical character, despite the assertions of comrade Trotsky, who is trying to discover a 'Right' and a 'Left' wing in the Party. That is to say, they were such disagreements as are inevitable where there is vigorous party life and real party activity.

Comrade Trotsky is wrong in asserting that the April demonstration in Leningrad gave rise to disagreements in the Central Committee. The Central Committee was absolutely united on this question and condemned the attempt of a group of comrades to arrest the Provisional Government at a time when the Bolsheviks were in a minority both in the Soviets and in the army. Had comrade Trotsky written the 'history' of October not according to Sukhanov, but according to authentic documents, he would easily have convinced himself of the error of his assertion. Comrade Trotsky is absolutely wrong in asserting that the attempt, 'on Lenin's initiative', to arrange a demonstration on 9 June was described as 'adventurism' by the 'rightwing' members of the Central Committee.¹⁰ Had comrade Trotsky not written according to Sukhanov, he would surely have known that the 9 June demonstration was postponed with the full agreement of Lenin, and that he urged the necessity of postponing it in a big speech he delivered at the well-known meeting of the Petrograd Committee (see minutes of the Petrograd Committee).¹¹

Comrade Trotsky is absolutely wrong in speaking about 'tragic' disagreements in the Central Committee in connection with the July armed demonstration. Comrade Trotsky is simply inventing in asserting that some members

10 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 104. Trotsky in fact refers to this demonstration as taking place on 10 June.

11 Lenin 1964ll, pp. 79–81. Lenin also refers to this demonstration as being planned for 10 June.

of the leading group in the Central Committee 'could not but regard the July episode as a harmful adventure'.¹² Comrade Trotsky, who was then not yet a member of our Central Committee and was merely our Soviet parliamentarian, might, of course, not have known that the Central Committee regarded the July demonstration only as a means of sounding out the enemy, that the Central Committee (and Lenin) did not want to convert, did not even think of converting, the demonstration into an uprising at a time when the Soviets in the capitals still supported the defencists. It is quite possible that some Bolsheviks did whimper over the July defeat. I know, for example, that some of the Bolsheviks who were arrested at the time were even prepared to desert our ranks. But to draw inferences from this against certain alleged 'rightists', alleged to be members of the Central Committee, is a shameful distortion of history.

Comrade Trotsky is wrong in declaring that during the Kornilov days a section of the Party leaders inclined towards the formation of a bloc with the defencists, towards supporting the Provisional Government. He, of course, is referring to those same alleged 'rightists' who keep him awake at night. Comrade Trotsky is wrong, for there exist documents, such as the Central Organ of the Party of that time, which refute his statements. Comrade Trotsky refers to Lenin's letter to the Central Committee warning against supporting Kerensky; but comrade Trotsky fails to understand Lenin's letters, their significance, their purpose. In his letters, Lenin sometimes deliberately ran ahead, pushing into the forefront mistakes that might possibly be committed, and criticising them in advance with the object of warning the Party and of safeguarding it against mistakes. Sometimes he would even magnify a 'trifle' and 'make a mountain out of a molehill' for the same pedagogical purpose. The leader of the party, especially if he is in hiding, cannot act otherwise, for he must see further than his comrades-in-arms, he must sound the alarm over every possible mistake, even over 'trifles'. But to infer from such letters of Lenin's (and he wrote quite a number of such letters) the existence of 'tragic' disagreements and to trumpet them forth means not to understand Lenin's letters, means not to know Lenin. This, probably, explains why Trotsky sometimes is wide of the mark. In short: there were no disagreements in the Central Committee during the Kornilov action, absolutely none.

After the July defeat, disagreement did indeed arise between the Central Committee and Lenin on the question of the future of the Soviets. It is known that Lenin, wishing to concentrate the Party's attention on the task of preparing the uprising outside the Soviets, warned against any infatuation with the latter,

12 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 105.

for he was of the opinion that, having been defiled by the defencists, they had become useless. The Central Committee and the Sixth Party Congress took a more cautious line and decided that there were no grounds for excluding the possibility that the Soviets would revive. The Kornilov revolt showed that this decision was correct. This disagreement, however, was of no great consequence for the Party. Later, Lenin admitted that the line taken by the Sixth Congress had been correct. It is interesting that comrade Trotsky has not clutched at this disagreement and has not magnified it to 'monstrous' proportions.

A united and solid party, the hub of the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses – such was the picture presented by our Party in that period.

3) The period of organisation of the assault (September–October). The major facts of this period: a) the convocation of the Democratic Conference and the collapse of the idea of a bloc with the Cadets; b) the Moscow and Petrograd Soviets go over to the side of the Bolsheviks; c) the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region; the Petrograd Soviet decides against the withdrawal of the troops; d) the decision of the Central Committee on the uprising and the formation of the Revolutionary Military Committee of the Leningrad Soviet; e) the Leningrad garrison decides to render the Leningrad Soviet armed support; a network of commissars of the Military Revolutionary Committee is organised; f) the Bolshevik armed forces go into action; the members of the Provisional Government are arrested; g) the Military Revolutionary Committee of the Leningrad Soviet takes power; the Second Congress of Soviets sets up the Council of People's Commissars.

The characteristic feature of this period is the rapid growth of the crisis, the utter consternation reigning among the ruling circles, the isolation of the Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and the mass flight of the vacillating elements to the side of the Bolsheviks. A peculiar feature of the tactics of the revolution in this period must be noted, namely, that the revolution strove to take every, or nearly every, step in its attack in the guise of defence. Undoubtedly, the refusal to allow the troops to be withdrawn from Leningrad was an important step in the revolution's attack; nevertheless, this attack was carried out under the slogan of protecting Leningrad from possible attack by the external enemy. Undoubtedly, the formation of the Military Revolutionary Committee was a still more important step in the attack upon the Provisional Government; nevertheless, it was carried out under the slogan of organising Soviet control over the actions of the Headquarters of the Military District. Undoubtedly, the open transition of the garrison to the side of the Military Revolutionary Committee and the organisation of a network of Soviet commissars marked the beginning of the uprising; nevertheless, the revolution took these steps under the slogan of protecting the Leningrad Soviet from possible

action by the counter-revolution. The revolution, as it were, masked its actions in attack under the cloak of defence in order the more easily to draw the irresolute, vacillating elements into its orbit. This, no doubt, explains the outwardly defensive character of the speeches, articles and slogans of that period, the inner content of which, nonetheless, was of a profoundly attacking nature.

Were there disagreements in the Central Committee in that period? Yes, there were, and fairly important ones at that. I have already spoken about the disagreements over the uprising. They are fully reflected in the minutes of the meetings of the Central Committee of 10 and 16 October. I shall, therefore, not repeat what I have already said. Three questions must now be dealt with: participation in the Preparliament, the role of the Soviets in the uprising, and the date of the uprising. This is all the more necessary because comrade Trotsky, in his zeal to push himself into a prominent place, has 'inadvertently' misrepresented the stand Lenin took on the last two questions. Undoubtedly, the disagreements on the question of the Pre-parliament were of a serious nature. What was, so to speak, the aim of the Pre-parliament? It was: to help the bourgeoisie to push the Soviets into the background and to lay the foundations of bourgeois parliamentarianism. Whether the Pre-parliament could have accomplished this task in the revolutionary situation that had arisen is another matter. Events showed that this aim could not be realised, and the Preparliament itself was a miscarriage of the Kornilov affair. There can be no doubt, however, that it was precisely this aim that the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries pursued in setting up the Pre-parliament. What could the Bolsheviks' participation in the Pre-parliament mean under those circumstances? Nothing but deceiving the proletarian masses about the true nature of the Pre-parliament. This is the chief explanation for the passion with which Lenin, in his letters, scourged those who were in favour of taking part in the Pre-parliament. There can be no doubt that it was a grave mistake to have taken part in the Pre-parliament. It would be a mistake, however, to think, as comrade Trotsky does, that those who were in favour of taking part in the Pre-parliament went into it for the purpose of constructive work, for the purpose of 'directing the working-class movement' 'into the channel of Social Democracy'. That is not at all the case. It is not true. Had that been the case, the Party would not have been able to rectify this mistake 'in two ticks' by demonstratively walking out of the Pre-parliament. Incidentally, the swift rectification of this mistake was an expression of our Party's vitality and revolutionary might. And now, permit me to correct a slight inaccuracy that has crept into the report of comrade Lentsner, the 'editor' of comrade Trotsky's works, about the meeting of the Bolshevik group at which a decision on the question of the Pre-parliament was taken. Comrade Lentsner says that there were two reporters at this meeting, Kame-

nev and Trotsky. That is not true. Actually, there were four reporters: two in favour of boycotting the Pre-parliament (Trotsky and Stalin), and two in favour of participation (Kamenev and Nogin).

Comrade Trotsky is in a still worse position when dealing with the stand Lenin took on the question of the form of the insurrection. According to comrade Trotsky, it appears that Lenin's view was that the party should take power in October 'independently of and behind the back of the Soviet'. Later on, criticising this nonsense, which he ascribes to Lenin, comrade Trotsky 'beats around the bush [*skachet i igraet*]' and finally delivers the following condescending phrase: 'That would have been a mistake'. Comrade Trotsky is here uttering a falsehood about Lenin; he is misrepresenting Lenin's views on the role of the Soviets in the uprising. A pile of documents can be cited, showing that Lenin proposed that power be taken through the Soviets, either the Leningrad or the Moscow Soviet, and not behind the back of the Soviets. Why did comrade Trotsky have to invent this more than strange legend about Lenin? Nor is comrade Trotsky in a better position when he 'analyses' the stand taken by the Central Committee and Lenin on the question of the date of the uprising. Reporting the famous meeting of the Central Committee of 10 October, comrade Trotsky asserts that at that meeting 'a resolution was carried to the effect that the uprising should take place not later than 15 October' (see *O Lenine*, p. 73).¹³ From this it appears that the Central Committee fixed 15 October as the date of the uprising and then itself violated that decision by postponing the date of the uprising to 25 October. Is that true? No, it is not. During that period the Central Committee passed only two resolutions on the uprising – one on 10 October and the other on 16 October. Let us read these resolutions.

The Central Committee's resolution of 10 October:

The Central Committee recognises that the international position of the Russian revolution (the revolt in the German navy, which is an extreme manifestation of the growth throughout Europe of the world socialist revolution; the threat of peace¹⁴ between the imperialists with the object of strangling the revolution in Russia) as well as the military situation (the indubitable decision of the Russian bourgeoisie and Kerensky and Co. to surrender Petrograd to the Germans), and the fact that the proletarian party has gained a majority in the Soviets – all this, taken in conjunc-

¹³ Trotsky 1971, p. 93.

¹⁴ Obviously, this should be 'a separate peace'. – *J. St.* [original footnote].

tion with the peasant revolt and the swing of popular confidence towards our Party (the elections in Moscow), and, finally, the obvious preparations being made for a second Kornilov revolt (the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the dispatch of Cossacks to Petrograd, the surrounding of Minsk by Cossacks, etc.) – all this places the armed uprising on the order of the day.

Considering, therefore, that an armed uprising is inevitable, and that the time for it is fully ripe, the Central Committee instructs all Party organisations to be guided accordingly, and to discuss and decide all practical questions (the Congress of Soviets of the Northern Region, the withdrawal of troops from Petrograd, the actions of the people in Moscow and Minsk, etc.) from this point of view.¹⁵

The resolution adopted by the conference of the Central Committee with responsible party workers on 16 October:

The meeting fully welcomes and fully supports the resolution of the Central Committee and calls upon all organisations and on workers and soldiers to make all-round, energetic preparations for an armed uprising and to support the centre set up for that purpose by the Central Committee; the meeting expresses its complete confidence that the Central Committee and the Soviet will indicate in good time the favourable moment and the most appropriate methods of attack.¹⁶

You see that comrade Trotsky's memory betrayed him about the date of the uprising and the Central Committee's resolution on the uprising.

Comrade Trotsky is absolutely wrong in asserting that Lenin underrated Soviet legality, that Lenin failed to appreciate the great importance of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets taking power on 25 October, and that this was the reason why he insisted that power be taken before 25 October. That is not true. Lenin proposed that power be taken before 25 October for two reasons. Firstly, because the counter-revolutionaries might have surrendered Leningrad at any moment, which would have drained the blood of the developing uprising, and so every day was precious. Secondly, because the mistake made by the Leningrad Soviet in openly fixing and announcing the day of the uprising

15 Lenin 1964mm, p. 190.

16 Lenin 1964nn, pp. 193–4.

(25 October) could not be rectified in any other way than by actually launching the uprising before the legal date set for it. The fact of the matter is that Lenin regarded insurrection as an art, and he could not help knowing that the enemy, informed about the date of the uprising (owing to the carelessness of the Leningrad Soviet) would certainly try to prepare for that day. Consequently, it was necessary to forestall the enemy, i.e. without fail to launch the uprising before the legal date. This is the chief explanation for the passion with which Lenin in his letters scourged those who made a fetish of the date – 25 October. Events showed that Lenin was absolutely right. It is well known that the uprising was launched prior to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets. It is well known that power was actually taken before the opening of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and it was taken not by the Congress of Soviets, but by the Leningrad Soviet, by the Military Revolutionary Committee. The Congress of Soviets merely took over power from the Leningrad Soviet. That is why comrade Trotsky's lengthy arguments about the importance of Soviet legality are quite beside the point.

A virile and mighty party standing at the head of the revolutionary masses who were storming and overthrowing bourgeois rule – such was the state of our Party in that period.

That is how matters stand with the legends about the preparation for October.

Trotskyism or Leninism?

We have dealt above with the legends directed against the Party and those about Lenin spread by comrade Trotsky and his supporters in connection with October and the preparation for it. We have exposed and refuted these legends. But the question arises: For what purpose did Trotsky need all these legends about October and the preparation for October, about Lenin and the Party of Lenin? What is the purpose of comrade Trotsky's new literary pronouncements against the Party? What is the sense, the purpose, the aim of these pronouncements now, when the Party does not want a discussion, when the Party is busy with a host of urgent tasks, when the Party needs united efforts to restore our economy and not a new struggle around old questions? For what purpose does comrade Trotsky need to drag the Party back, to new discussions?

Comrade Trotsky asserts that all this is needed for the purpose of 'studying' October. But is it not possible to study October without giving another kick at the Party and its leader Lenin? What sort of a 'history' of October is it that begins and ends with attempts to discredit the chief leader of the Octo-

ber uprising, to discredit the Party, which organised and carried through the uprising? No, it is not a matter here of studying October. That is not the way to study October. That is not the way to write the history of October. Obviously, there is a different 'design' here, and everything goes to show that this 'design' is that comrade Trotsky by his literary pronouncements is making another (yet another!) attempt to create the conditions for substituting Trotskyism for Leninism. Comrade Trotsky needs 'desperately' to discredit the Party, and its cadres who carried through the uprising, in order, after discrediting the Party, to proceed to discredit Leninism. And it is necessary for him to discredit Leninism in order to drag in Trotskyism as the 'sole' 'proletarian' (don't laugh!) ideology. All this, of course (oh, of course!) under the flag of Leninism, so that the dragging operation may be performed 'as painlessly as possible'.

That is the essence of comrade Trotsky's latest literary pronouncements.

That is why those literary pronouncements of comrade Trotsky's sharply raise the question of Trotskyism.

And so, what is Trotskyism?

Trotskyism possesses three specific features which bring it into irreconcilable contradiction with Leninism. What are these features? **Firstly**, Trotskyism is the theory of permanent (uninterrupted) revolution. But what is permanent revolution in its Trotskyist interpretation? It is revolution that fails to take the poor [*malomoshchnyi*] peasantry into account as a revolutionary force. Comrade Trotsky's permanent revolution, as Lenin said, is 'skipping' the peasant movement, 'playing at the seizure of power'. Why is it dangerous? Because such a revolution, if an attempt had been made to bring it about, would inevitably have ended in failure, for it would have divorced from the Russian proletariat its ally, the poor peasantry. This explains the struggle that Leninism has been waging against Trotskyism ever since 1905. How does Trotsky appraise Leninism from the standpoint of this struggle? He regards it as a theory that possesses 'anti-revolutionary features' (see 1905, p. 285).¹⁷ What is this indignant opinion about Leninism based on? On the fact that, at the proper time, Leninism advocated and upheld the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. But comrade Trotsky does not confine himself to this indignant opinion. He goes further and asserts:

'The entire edifice of Leninism at the present time is built on lies and falsification and contains the poisonous seeds of its own destruction' (see Trotsky's letter to Chkheidze from 25 February 1913).¹⁸

17 Trotsky 1972b, pp. 314–18.

18 For the original letter, see Trotsky to N.S. Chkheidze, 1 April 1913, Nicolaevsky Collection,

As you see, we have before us two opposite lines.

Secondly. Trotskyism is distrust of the Bolshevik Party principle, of the monolithic character of the Party, of its hostility towards opportunist elements. In the sphere of organisation, Trotskyism is the theory that revolutionaries and opportunists can co-exist and form groups and coteries within a single party. You are, no doubt, familiar with the history of comrade Trotsky's 'August Bloc', in which the Martovites and Recallists, the Liquidators and Trotskyists, happily co-operated, pretending that they were a 'real' party. It is well known that this patchwork 'party' pursued the aim of destroying the Bolshevik Party. What was the nature of 'our disagreements' at that time? It was that Leninism regarded the destruction of the 'August Bloc' as a guarantee of the development of the proletarian party, whereas Trotskyism regarded that bloc as the basis for building a 'real' party.

Again, as you see, we have two opposite lines.

Thirdly. Trotskyism is distrust of the leaders of Bolshevism, an attempt to discredit, to defame them. I do not know of a single trend in the Party that could compare with Trotskyism in the matter of discrediting the leaders of Leninism or the central institutions of the Party. For example, what should be said of Comrade Trotsky's 'polite' opinion of Lenin, whom he described as 'a professional exploiter of every kind of backwardness in the Russian working-class movement'? (see the already quoted letter to Chkheidze). And this is far from being the most 'polite' of the 'polite' opinions comrade Trotsky has expressed.

How could it happen that comrade Trotsky, who had such an unpleasant stock-in-trade, found himself, after all, in the ranks of the Bolsheviks during the October movement? It happened because at that time comrade Trotsky abandoned (actually did abandon) that stock-in-trade; he hid it in the cupboard. Had he not performed that 'operation', real co-operation with him would have been impossible. The theory of the 'August Bloc', i.e. the theory of unity with the Mensheviks, had already been shattered and thrown overboard by the revolution, for how could there be any talk about unity when an armed struggle was raging between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks? Comrade Trotsky had no alternative but to admit that this theory was useless. The same misadventure 'happened' to the theory of permanent revolution, for not a single Bolshevik contemplated the immediate seizure of power on the day after the February Revolution, and comrade Trotsky could not but know that the Bolsheviks would not allow him, in the words of Lenin, 'to play at the seizure of power'. Comrade

Hoover Institution, box 656, folder 5, pp. 1-2; Trotsky discusses this letter in his autobiography (Trotsky 1970a, pp. 515-16). See The Chkheidze Controversy, Document 14, p. 422.

Trotsky had no alternative but recognise the Bolsheviks' policy of fighting for influence in the Soviets, of fighting to win over the peasantry. As regards the third specific feature of Trotskyism (distrust of the Bolshevik leaders), it naturally had to recede into the background owing to the obvious failure of the first two features.

Under those circumstances, could comrade Trotsky do anything else but hide his stock-in-trade in the cupboard and follow the Bolsheviks, considering that he had no group of his own of any significance, and that he came to the Bolsheviks as a political individual, without an army? Of course, he could not!

What is the lesson to be learnt from this? Only one: that prolonged collaboration between the Leninists and comrade Trotsky is possible only if the latter completely abandons his old stock-in-trade, only if he completely accepts Leninism. Comrade Trotsky writes about the lessons of October, but he forgets that, in addition to all the other lessons, there is one more lesson of October, the one I have just mentioned, which is of prime importance for Trotskyism. Trotskyism ought to learn that lesson of October too. It is evident, however, that Trotskyism has not learnt that lesson. The fact of the matter is that the old stock-in-trade of Trotskyism that was hidden in the cupboard in the period of the October movement is now being dragged into the light again in the hope that a market will be found for it, seeing that the market in our country is expanding. Undoubtedly, comrade Trotsky's new literary pronouncements are an attempt to revert to Trotskyism, to 'overcome' Leninism, to drag in, implant, all the specific features of Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism is not a mere repetition of the old Trotskyism; its feathers have been plucked and it is rather bedraggled; it is incomparably milder in spirit and more moderate in form than the old Trotskyism; but, in essence, it undoubtedly retains all the specific features of the old Trotskyism. The new Trotskyism does not dare to come out as a militant force against Leninism; it prefers to operate under the common flag of Leninism, under the slogan of interpreting, improving Leninism. That is because it is weak. It cannot be regarded as an accident that the appearance of the new Trotskyism coincided with Lenin's departure. In Lenin's lifetime it would not have dared to take this risky step.

What are the characteristic features of the new Trotskyism?

1) On the question of permanent revolution. The new Trotskyism does not deem it necessary openly to uphold the theory of permanent revolution. It 'simply' asserts that the October Revolution fully confirmed the idea of permanent revolution. From this it draws the following conclusion: the important and acceptable part of Leninism is the part that came after the war, in the period of the October Revolution; on the other hand, the part of Leninism that existed before the war, before the October Revolution, is wrong and unacceptable.

Hence, the Trotskyists' theory of the division of Leninism into two parts: pre-war Leninism, the 'old', 'useless' Leninism with its idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, and the new, post-war, October Leninism, which they count on adapting to the requirements of Trotskyism. Trotskyism needs this theory of the division of Leninism as a first, more or less 'acceptable' step that is necessary to facilitate further steps in its struggle against Leninism. But Leninism is not an eclectic theory stuck together out of diverse elements and capable of being cut into parts. Leninism is an integral theory, which arose in 1903, has passed the test of three revolutions, and is now being carried forward as the battle-flag of the world proletariat. 'As a current of political thought and as a political party', Lenin said, 'Bolshevism has existed since 1903. Only the history of Bolshevism during the *entire* period of its existence can satisfactorily explain why it has been able to build up and to maintain, under most difficult conditions, the iron discipline needed for the victory of the proletariat' (see *Infantile Disorder*).¹⁹ Bolshevism and Leninism are one. They are two names for one and the same thing. Hence, the theory of the division of Leninism into two parts is a theory intended to destroy Leninism, to substitute Trotskyism for Leninism.

Needless to say, the Party cannot reconcile itself to this grotesque theory.

2) On the question of the Party principle. The old Trotskyism tried to undermine the Bolshevik Party principle by means of the theory (and practice) of unity with the Mensheviks. But that theory has suffered such disgrace that nobody now even wants to remember it. To undermine the Party principle, present-day Trotskyism has invented the new, less odious and almost 'democratic' theory of contrasting the old cadres to the younger Party element. According to Trotskyism, our Party does not have a single and integral history. Trotskyism divides the history of our Party into two parts of unequal importance: pre-October and post-October. The pre-October part of the history of our Party is, properly speaking, not history, but 'pre-history', the unimportant or, at all events, not very important preparatory period of our Party. The post-October part of the history of our Party, however, is real, genuine history. In the former, there are the 'old', 'pre-historic', unimportant cadres of our Party. In the latter, there is the new, real, 'historic' Party. It scarcely needs proof that this singular scheme of the history of the Party is a scheme to disrupt the unity between the old and the new cadres of our Party, a scheme to destroy the Bolshevik Party principle.

Needless to say, the Party cannot reconcile itself to this grotesque scheme.

19 Lenin 1966b, p. 24.

3) On the question of the leaders of Bolshevism. The old Trotskyism tried to discredit Lenin more or less openly, without fearing the consequences. The new Trotskyism is more cautious. It tries to achieve the purpose of the old Trotskyism by pretending to praise, to exalt Lenin. I think it is worth quoting a few examples.

The Party knows that Lenin was a relentless revolutionary. But it knows also that he was cautious, that he disliked reckless people and often, with a firm hand, restrained those who were infatuated with terrorism, including comrade Trotsky himself. Comrade Trotsky touches on this subject in his book *On Lenin*. But from his portrayal of Lenin one might think that all Lenin did was 'stress the inevitability of terror at every suitable opportunity' (see p. 104).²⁰ The impression is created that Lenin was the most bloodthirsty of all the bloodthirsty Bolsheviks. For what purpose did Trotsky need this uncalled for and totally unjustified exaggeration?

The Party knows that Lenin was an exemplary Party man, who did not like to settle questions alone, without the leading collective body, on the spur of the moment, without careful investigation and verification. Comrade Trotsky touches upon this aspect, too, in his book. But the portrait he paints is not that of Lenin, but of a sort of Chinese mandarin, who settles important questions in the quiet of his study, by intuition.

Do you want to know how our Party settled the question of dispersing the Constituent Assembly? Listen to comrade Trotsky:

'Of course, the Constituent Assembly should be dissolved', said Lenin, 'but what is to be done with the left Social Revolutionaries?'

Old [Mark] Natanson gave us a great deal of encouragement. He came to 'consult' us, and right from the beginning said, 'Well, I think that nevertheless the Assembly will have to be scattered by force'.

'Bravo!' exclaimed Lenin. 'That's right, that's right! But will your people agree to this?'

'Some are hesitant, but I believe that in the end they will agree', answered Natanson.

see p. 92²¹

²⁰ Trotsky 1971, p. 123.

²¹ Trotsky 1971, pp. 111–12.

That is how history is written.

Do you want to know how the Party settled the question about the Supreme Military Council? Listen to Trotsky:

'Without serious and experienced military personnel we shall not manage to overcome chaos', I kept telling Vladimir Ilyich after each visit to the General Staff.

'Yes, it seems you are right. But how to guard against treachery? ...'

'We shall assign a commissar to each.'

'Let's assign two', exclaimed Lenin, 'and tough ones at that. It is impossible that we should not have tough Communists'.

In this way the Supreme Military Council came into existence (see p. 106).²²

That is how comrade Trotsky writes history.

Why did comrade Trotsky need these 'Arabian Nights' stories derogatory to Lenin? Was it to exalt V.I. Lenin, the leader of the Party? It doesn't look like it.

The Party knows that Lenin was the greatest Marxist of our times, a profound theoretician and a most experienced revolutionary, to whom any trace of Blanquism was alien. Comrade Trotsky touches upon this aspect, too, in his book. But the portrait he paints is not that of the giant Lenin, but of a dwarf-like Blanquist who, in the October days, advises the Party 'to seize power by itself, independently of the Soviets and behind its back'.²³ I have already said, however, that there is not a scrap of truth in this description.

Why did comrade Trotsky need this flagrant ... inaccuracy? Is this not an attempt to discredit Lenin 'just a little'?

Such are the characteristic features of the new Trotskyism.

What is the danger of this new Trotskyism? It is that Trotskyism, owing to its entire inner content, stands every chance of becoming the centre and rallying point of the non-proletarian elements who are striving to weaken, to disintegrate the proletarian dictatorship.

²² Trotsky 1971, p. 125.

²³ Trotsky 1971, p. 92.

What is to be done now, you ask? What are the Party's immediate tasks in connection with comrade Trotsky's new literary pronouncements?

Trotskyism is taking action now in order to discredit Bolshevism and to undermine its foundations. It is the duty of the Party to bury Trotskyism as an ideological trend.

There is talk about repressive measures against the opposition and about the possibility of a split. That is nonsense, comrades. Our Party is strong and mighty. It will not allow any splits. As regards repressive measures, I am emphatically opposed to them. What we need now is not repressive measures, but an extensive ideological struggle against renascent Trotskyism.

We did not want and did not strive for this literary discussion. Trotskyism is forcing it upon us by its anti-Leninist pronouncements. Well, we are ready, comrades.

‘Our Differences’¹

L. Trotsky

The Purpose of this Explanation

In the discussion now swirling around my book *1917* (it is clear from the course of the discussion that the book was serving as a pretext), a multitude of factual, theoretical, and personal issues have been raised. I would now like to clarify those issues, which, as far as I understand, are most offensive to the interests of the party.

1. Is it true that I am conducting a revision (a review, a modification) of Leninism under the concealed banner of ‘Trotskyism’?

2. Is it true that I wrote the introduction to my book *1917* from a special ‘Trotskyist’ perspective and even lied about some questions so as to denigrate Leninism?

3. Is it true that my introduction is a ‘platform’ and that it is my broad goal to create a ‘right wing’ in the party?

Of course, this is not just about what I wanted to say but also about the way in which my statements have been understood. The issue might after all be put in the following way: Trotsky is not consciously striving to substitute Leninism with Trotskyism; there are no grounds at all for accusing him of that. But Trotsky does not understand Leninism or certain important aspects of Leninism; and so, although not desiring it and not striving for it, Trotsky is in practice distorting Leninism and creating an ideological platform for a grouping that cannot be reconciled with Leninism. On the other hand, one might concede or pre-

1 In the top left corner of the manuscript is written in Trotsky’s hand: ‘Only copy. Not published.’ Trotsky’s book on 1917, the subject of this piece, was introduced by an article by Trotsky ‘The Lessons of October’ which was immediately subjected to harsh criticism by G. Zinov’ev, L. Kamenev, E. Kviring, O. Kuusinen, G. Sokol’nikov, I. Stalin, and also the editorial board of *Pravda* (N. Bukharin). (See *Ob ‘Urokhakh Oktiabria’* 1924). In response to this criticism, Trotsky wrote the article ‘Our Differences’ but never published it, possibly fearing a new wave of criticism being directed at him. In the manuscript, preserved in the Trotsky Archive, p. 35 skips to p. 43. – Compiler’s note [original footnote]. [Trotsky may have made a vain attempt to get this published in *Pravda* (Skorkin 2011, p. 137); I have translated it on the basis of Trotskii 1990, pp. 110–42].

sume that the conditions of the past, the difficult situation that has developed since Lenin's death, in addition to various personal circumstances, have created a certain preconception causing people to see 'Trotskyism' where it does not exist, or, at most, wherever there are inevitable nuances of thinking within the general context of Bolshevism.

What can and should be the purpose of my explanation to the party in these circumstances?

First of all, I think I have to clarify precisely what it was I wanted to say; and, secondly, I have to eliminate incorrect interpretations wherever they have occurred, or at least on the most important questions. In this way it might at least be possible to sweep away those apparent disagreements based on misconception or on biased interpretation. This alone would be a big plus because it would help to show whether there is any real basis for the primary, critical accusation that I – consciously or unconsciously – am counterposing a special line of Trotskyism to Leninism. If, after eliminating misconceptions, individual errors, biased interpretations and the like, it turns out that two different lines do indeed exist, then of course there can be no question of glossing over this important situation. The party must, by whatever efforts and strict measures necessary, preserve the unity of its own revolutionary method, its own political line, its own traditions – the unity of Leninism. In this case, it would be wrong to forego 'repression', as several comrades have done, comrades who at the same time have accused me of pursuing a particular, non-Bolshevik line. However, I do not believe for one moment that it will come to this, even though the discussion has progressed very far and even though a particular interpretation of my book and my position has already been presented to the party.

In my explanation I am trying to show that there is no cause to invoke the spectre of 'Trotskyism' as a threat to the party. Of course, I am not able to deal with all of the many, many arguments, references, quotations, and allusions made by those comrades who have recently written about 'Trotskyism' and 'against Trotskyism'. It would be both pointless and quite impossible to follow that path. I think it would be more revealing of the basic issue and more useful for the reader, if I begin by clarifying those conclusions in my introduction which have been deemed to be striking or flagrant manifestations of 'Trotskyism' and which for precisely this reason have served as the starting point for this current campaign. On the most controversial issues I hope to show that in my interpretation of October I was guided not only by the Leninist method, but also remained completely consistent with Lenin's very precise and concrete evaluations and conclusions on those very issues.

I cannot limit myself, however, to these clarifications alone. The fact is that the accusation of 'Trotskyism', if based only on my statements, speeches and

articles from recent years, would not prove to be persuasive enough. To lend this accusation more weight and significance, my political past is brought in, namely my revolutionary activity up to the moment when I joined the Bolshevik Party. I think it is necessary to offer an explanation about this as well. That is the thrust of the present article.

If I thought that my explanations might pour oil onto the flames of the discussion – or if I were to be told this openly and directly by those comrades who will decide if this piece is published – I would refuse to publish it, however heavily burdened I am by the accusation that I am destroying Leninism. I would tell myself to wait until a calmer period of party life gives me the chance, even belatedly, to refute this untrue accusation. But it seems to me that an open explanation – i.e. a response to the main accusation made against me – might not inflame but rather calm the atmosphere in the party by putting this issue in its proper perspective.

Indeed. If it were to turn out in fact that a Trotskyist line was being pursued against the Leninist line of the party, then this would mean that we were dealing with an incipient struggle of different class tendencies. In that case no explanations of any kind would help. The proletarian party maintains itself by purging itself. But if there is in fact no Trotskyism, if the spectre of Trotskyism is on the one hand a reflection of the pre-revolutionary past, and on the other an emanation of the suspicion caused by Lenin's death; if the spectre of Trotskyism can in practice be conjured up only by dredging up Trotsky's letter to Chkheidze, etc. from the archives² – then an open explanation might help, it might clean out old accumulated prejudices, scatter the spectres, and clear the air in the party. That is precisely the aim of the present explanation.

The Past

I have already stated above that my introduction to the book *1917* has been linked in the discussion with my entire activity and presented as an expression of a striving by 'Trotskyism' to substitute itself for Leninism as the party's doctrine and political method.

When the question was posed in this way, the party had to shift its attention to a great degree away from the present and future to the past. Old documents, quotations from old polemics, etc. have become part of the party discourse. These published materials include in particular a letter I wrote to the then

2 The Chkheidze Controversy, Document 14, pp. 421–23.

Social Democratic (Menshevik) deputy Chkheidze on 1 April 1913, i.e. almost twenty years ago.³ This letter could not help but make the deepest impression on every member of the party, and particularly on those who had not experienced the pre-war factional struggle in the emigration, and to whom therefore the letter will come as a complete surprise.

This letter was written at a time of extremely sharp factional struggle. There is no point here relaying the details of how such a letter came to be written. The principled reasons were that I had at that time adopted a position on the Mensheviks that was very different from Lenin's position. I believed it necessary to fight for the unification of the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks into one party. Lenin believed that the split with the Mensheviks had to be deepened so as to purge the party of the main source of bourgeois influences on the proletariat. Much later I wrote that my fundamental political error was my failure to understand in time the gulf between Bolshevism and Menshevism on matters of principle. This is why I did not understand the meaning of Lenin's organisational political struggle, both against Menshevism and against that conciliationist line which I myself was defending.

Those deep disagreements that separated me from Bolshevism for a number of years and, in many cases, brought me into sharp and hostile conflict with Bolshevism, were most vividly expressed vis-à-vis the Menshevik faction. I was proceeding from the fundamentally flawed assumption that the development of the revolution and the pressure of the proletarian masses would ultimately force both factions along the same path. I therefore saw the split as a wasteful squandering of revolutionary forces. And since the active role in the split belonged to Bolshevism, for Lenin thought that the revolutionary character of the proletarian party could be preserved only through a relentless ideological and organisational demarcation from Menshevism (and the entire later history has completely confirmed the correctness of this policy), then I, in my 'conciliationism', clashed with Bolshevism at many sharp turns in the road. To Lenin's struggle against Menshevism had to be added a struggle against 'conciliationism' which was often termed 'Trotskyism'. All those comrades who have read Lenin's work know about this. It is absurd, therefore, to talk as if someone were 'hiding' something here. It would, of course, never occur to me now, in retrospect, to doubt the correctness of principle and the enormous historical farsightedness of Lenin's criticism of Russian 'conciliationism' which shared many common features with the international tendency of centrism. I have for some time considered that it is clear and indisputable for each member

3 See 'L.D. Trotskii – N.S. Chkheidze', in *Lenin o Trotskom* 1925, pp. 217–19.

of the Bolshevik Party that the very idea of a discussion on this issue would be simply ridiculous, given what the party has done, written, assimilated, verified and confirmed in this area.

Fighting, as I said, against a 'general demarcation' and schism, I consequently engaged in a series of bitter conflicts with those ideological and organisational methods used by Lenin to prepare, create, and educate our party of today. The word 'Leninism' did not even exist in the Bolshevik faction at that time. Indeed, Lenin would not have tolerated it. Only since Lenin's illness and especially after his death has the party introduced the word Leninism into its lexicon, having absorbed as it were the enormous creativity that was Lenin's life. Of course, this word is not counterposed to Marxism but it includes everything new that has enriched the school of international Marxism, both theoretically and practically, under Lenin's leadership. If we take the pre-revolutionary era, then the word 'Leninism' was used only by the opponents of Bolshevism to describe what they regarded as the most negative and harmful aspects of Bolshevik policies. For a 'conciliator' like me, Bolshevism's most negative feature was its schismatic tendencies [*raskol'nichestvo*], its factional struggle, its organisational demarcation, and so on. It was in that very sense that I used the word 'Leninism' at those intense moments in the polemics. It is now possible to make a great impression on an inexperienced and uninformed party member by asking him: 'do you know what Leninism is according to Trotsky?' and then read him a factional attack against Leninism from old articles or letters. This is hardly the correct approach. It relies on ignorance. Such quotations sound to my ears no less barbaric now than to the ears of every other party member. They can only be understood in the context of past history, namely in the context of the struggle between Bolshevism and Conciliationism – a struggle in which both historical rectitude and victory were completely on the side of Bolshevism. Furthermore, the entire history of Lenin's activity shows that he can be understood – not only as a political figure, but as a human being – only by accepting his conception of history, his goals, his methods, and his means of struggle. Lenin cannot be evaluated separately from Leninism. Lenin cannot be evaluated only in part. His political persona rules out any kind of half-heartedness. Through his methods he forced everybody either to march in lockstep with him or to fight against him. It is absolutely clear therefore that conciliationism, which signifies half-heartedness on the fundamental issues of revolution, was alien to Lenin's very persona and in many respects incomprehensible. By fighting for what I thought was correct at the time – for the unity of all factions of Social Democracy in the name of an imaginary 'unity' of the workers' movement, I thus often ended up on this path, clashing with Lenin as a political figure.

Until a revolutionary has adopted the correct attitude to the fundamental task of building the party and to the methods it employs in its work, there can be no question of his correct, stable, and consistent participation in the workers' movement. Without the proper relationship between doctrine, slogans, tactics, and the work of the party organisation, there can be no revolutionary Marxist, Bolshevik politics. Lenin often expressed in sharply polemical terms the idea that my revolutionary ideas or propositions were mere 'phrases', because, in my conciliationism, I clashed with Bolshevism which was building the basic core of the proletarian movement. Was Lenin correct? Without a doubt.

Without the Bolshevik Party, the October Revolution could not have been achieved or consolidated. The real revolutionary work, then, was the work that helped this party to develop and become strong. Any other revolutionary work remained a side road to this main road, and possessed no internal guarantees of reliability and success, and in many instances represented a direct threat to the main revolutionary work of this period. In this sense Lenin was right when he said that the conciliationist position, which encompassed Menshevism, frequently transforms revolutionary slogans, prospects, and so on, into phrases. There can be no arguing with this basic Leninist take on centrism. It would be grotesque to start a discussion about this in the Bolshevik Party. In any event, for my part I see no reason at all for such a discussion.

My change of view on this question began with the start of the imperialist war. In all of my evaluations, articulated frequently after 1907, a European war had to create a revolutionary situation. Despite the expectations though, this revolutionary situation led to complete betrayal by Social Democracy. Step by step I reappraised my evaluation of the relationship between party and class, between revolutionary action and proletarian organisation. Under the influence of the social patriotic betrayal by international Menshevism, I gradually came to the conclusion about the need not only for an ideological struggle against Menshevism – something I had recognised earlier, although not consistently enough, it is true – but also for an irrevocable organisational split with it. This reappraisal did not occur at one fell swoop. Inconsistencies and reversals can be found in my articles and speeches during the war. Lenin was absolutely right when he came out against each and every manifestation of my centrism, emphasising them, even intentionally exaggerating them. But if you take the entire war period as a whole, then it becomes quite clear that the awful humiliation of socialism from the start of the war became a turning point for me from centrism to Bolshevism – on all issues without exception. And as I devised a more and more correct, i.e. Bolshevik, conception of the mutual relations between class and party, theory and politics, politics and organisation,

my general revolutionary approach to bourgeois society naturally became more vital, more realistic. From the moment I realised the critical need for a mortal battle against defencism, I came face-to-face with Lenin's position. What had seemed to me to be 'schismatism', 'disorganisation', etc. etc., now appeared to me as a life-saving and incomparably far-sighted struggle for the revolutionary independence of the proletarian party. I saw not only Lenin's political methods and organisational techniques, but his entire political and human persona in a new light, in the light of Bolshevism, namely in a true Leninist light. It is only possible to understand and grasp Lenin when you have become a Bolshevik. Never again after this did the question of 'Trotskyism' as a special tendency occur to me. Never again did I get it into my head to pose one or another question from the special viewpoint of 'Trotskyism'. The assertion that I joined the party with the idea of changing or substituting Leninism with Trotskyism is untrue and monstrous. I joined the Bolshevik Party as a Bolshevik. When Lenin, in a conversation about merging the Interdistrict Organisation with the Bolsheviks, asked who among my like-minded colleagues I thought should be on the Central Committee, I replied that for me this question was a political non-starter as I could see no disagreements at all which would separate me from Bolshevism.

Of course, I can be rebuked for not coming to a correct evaluation of Menshevism earlier. This means rebuking me for not becoming a Bolshevik in 1903. Nobody though chooses their path of development arbitrarily. I came to Bolshevism by a long and complicated path. On this path my only interests were those of the revolution and the proletariat. I fought against Leninism when I was convinced that Leninism was wrongly dividing the working class. When I realised my mistake after years of experience, I came to Leninism. I, of course, take political responsibility for my complex path of development.

My whole past however was completely and utterly known to the Central Committee of our party and to all its old members when I returned from America in May 1917 and placed myself at the disposal of the Bolshevik Party. There were political mistakes in my past but nothing that would cast the slightest shadow on my revolutionary honour. If I came to Leninism later than many other comrades did, I still came early enough to be one of Lenin's closest collaborators in the July Days, in the October Revolution, in the Civil War, and in other work of the Soviet years. When I once stated (this is a specific accusation against me) that I consider my path to Bolshevism to be no worse than other paths, I was of course referring to individual intellectual paths, and not to the collective path of the proletarian party. I merely meant that, insofar as people can make judgements about themselves, my path brought me to Bolshevism firmly and for ever. To clarify my reasoning process, I will permit myself the follow-

ing historical example. Franz Mehring, the well-known German Marxist, came to Marx and Engels late and after a great struggle. Even more, Mehring first went to Social Democracy, then moved away from it, and only later embraced it once and for all. In the old archives are harsh attacks by Mehring against Marx and Engels as well as Engels's devastating comments about Mehring. In the internal party struggle, Mehring was frequently reminded of his past. Nonetheless Mehring came to Marxism firmly and for ever, and he died the founder of the German Communist Party.

With great care comrade Kamenev has collected all those quotations from Lenin which reveal the incorrectness of my position. Comrade Kamenev turns Lenin's polemical blows over a number of years into a definitive characterisation of me. The reader is bound however to get the impression that this characterisation is incomplete. The reader will find no answer at all to the question whether my preceding (up to 1914 and up to 1917) revolutionary activity consisted solely of errors, or whether there were aspects in it which drew me closer to Bolshevism, guided me to it. Without an answer to this question, my future participation in the work of the party would be completely inexplicable. Apart from this, Kamenev's characterisation inevitably gives rise to other, purely factual, questions. Surely what comrade Kamenev has collected is not everything that Lenin wrote or said on this? Surely Lenin made other comments, based on the experience of the years of revolution? Surely it is not right and proper today, at the end of 1924, to tell the party only about statements from the pre-revolutionary years, while saying nothing about statements emanating from our mutual work and struggle? These questions must inevitably occur to every serious reader. Old quotations are not enough. They can only lead to the conclusion that tendentiousness and bias are at play here.

The Role of the Party

To represent one or another of my views or articles as 'Trotskyism', and to link them with my past mistakes for that purpose, a great deal has to be skipped over, and especially 1917. And to do this, it is necessary to show retrospectively that I did not understand the events of 1917, that my unreserved support for Lenin's April Theses was the result of misunderstanding, that I did not understand the role of the party in the overthrow, that I ignored the significance of the entire history of the party, and so on, and so forth. This cannot be supported on the basis of the events of 1917 because my participation in those events could give no one, then or now, the slightest cause to accuse me of pursuing some kind of special line. The charge of Trotskyism, then, cannot refer to these events or

to my part in them, but rather to my article which draws several lessons from these events. That is why the entire charge of 'Trotskyism' against me hinges to a great extent, perhaps even a decisive extent, on whether or not my elaboration of the events of 1917 distorts Leninism and counterposes to it a different, special tendency which is incompatible with Leninism. The charge of 'Trotskyism' against my 'The Lessons of October' thus becomes the central knot which binds the entire edifice of the 'Trotskyist' threat to the party. Furthermore – and this is the crux of the matter – the knot binding this entire artificial edifice is a slipknot. Pull at it firmly enough, and it falls apart. Only extreme nitpicking combined with extreme bias could make of my 'The Lessons of October' a deviation from Leninism rather than a careful and conscientious application of Leninism. This is precisely what I want to show now vis-à-vis the main questions under dispute.

One particularly shocking assertion, because it is a barefaced lie, is that I have ignored the party in my discussion of the October overthrow. For the central premise of my introduction, and the reason for writing it, was based entirely on a recognition of the decisive role of the party in the proletarian overthrow. 'The chief instrument of the proletarian overthrow is the party' (p. xiv).⁴ I use the experience of the defeats of the post-war revolutionary movement in several countries to illustrate this idea. Our mistake, I say again, insofar as we prematurely expected the victory of the European proletariat as a result of the war, was that we failed to appreciate sufficiently the significance of the party for the proletarian revolution. The German workers were not able to win either in 1918 or in 1919 because they lacked the chief instrument of victory – a Bolshevik party. I emphasise twice in the introduction that the bourgeoisie as a class enjoyed a whole range of advantages in a seizure of power, while the proletariat needed a revolutionary party to make up for those advantages.

If there is a single idea I have repeated tenfold since the defeat of the German revolution, it is the idea that even the most advantageous revolutionary conditions might not bring about the victory of the proletariat if it is not led by a true, revolutionary party capable of achieving victory. This is the main thrust of my report in Tiflis, 'On the Road to the European Revolution' (11 April 1924), and of my reports 'Perspectives and Tasks in the East' (21 April 1924), 'May Day in the East and West' (29 April 1924), 'At a New Turning-Point' (the introduction to my book *Five Years of the Comintern*), 'Through What Stage are We Passing?'

4 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 89.

(21 June 1924), and so on and so forth.⁵ In my aforementioned speech in Tiflis, in which I address the causes of defeat of the German revolution, I said:

Why then in Germany has there been no victory thus far? I think that there can be only one answer: because Germany did not have a Bolshevik party, nor did it have a leader such as we had in October ... What was lacking? A party with the tempering that our party has ... This, comrades, is the central question, and we must learn to understand and value more clearly and profoundly the character, nature, significance of our own party, which secured victory for the proletariat in October and a whole series of victories since October.

Zapad i Vostok, p. 11⁶

I repeat that this is the central motif of all my speeches and articles on the question of the proletarian revolution, especially after last year's defeat in Germany. I could present dozens of quotations in support of this. Is it reasonable to assume that this main idea, this main conclusion from all this historical experience and in particular the experience of the past decade, was suddenly forgotten, dropped or distorted by me as I worked on 'The Lessons of October'? No, this is not reasonable, and it did not happen. There was not the slightest hint of it. On the contrary, my entire introduction is built on the framework I laid out in my speech in Tiflis: 'We must learn to understand and value more clearly and profoundly the character, nature, significance of our own party, which secured victory for the proletariat in October and a whole series of victories since October'.⁷ Of course, I am not going to argue this idea again here because I consider this 'lesson' of October to be proven, verified, indisputable and beyond doubt. But the very idea of the decisive role of the party and its leadership is at the heart of my introduction. To show this it would be necessary simply to quote the entire introduction, putting the main ideas in bold print. Unfortunately, this is not possible. I would just ask the interested reader to read or re-read the introduction from this point of view with pencil in hand, and in particular, to pay special attention to the pages: XII, XIII and XIV, XLI, XLI, XLIII, XLVI, and to the chapter 'Once More on the Soviets and the Party in a Proletarian Revolu-

5 See, esp., L. Trotsky, *Zapad i Vostok* (Moscow, 1924) [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1924f]. [For the individual reports mentioned, see Trotsky 1968; Trotsky 1973a; Trotsky 1973b; Trotsky 1945, pp. 1–15; Trotsky 1965c].

6 Trotsky 1968, p. 6.

7 Trotsky 1968, p. 6.

tion' (p. LVII).⁸ Here I will restrict myself to just one example. In the concluding chapter of the introduction, I object to the idea, which has come up in our press over the past year, that in England the revolution will come 'not through the party, but through the trade unions'.⁹ In my introduction, I say the following on this:

Without a party, separately from a party, bypassing a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot triumph. This is the main lesson of the past decade. It is true that the English trade unions might become a powerful lever of the proletarian revolution; they might, for example, even replace the Workers' Soviets, under the right conditions and at the right time. But they will not be able to do this separately from a Communist Party, and certainly not in opposition to it, but only if Communist influence in the trade unions becomes decisive. We have paid too dearly for this conclusion – about the role and meaning of a party in a proletarian revolution – to renounce it so easily or even to downplay its significance.

p. IX¹⁰

And now I am being accused of renouncing it or minimising its significance! This one quotation is enough, given what has been said above, to show that under the term 'Trotskyism' a tendency is being ascribed to me which directly contradicts not only the spirit and letter of my introduction, but also my entire conception of proletarian revolution. From this viewpoint, the references to my forgetting or consciously ignoring the role of the Petrograd Committee of our party in the overthrow already seem like petty quibbling. My introduction is not the story of the role of individual institutions or organisations of the party, nor is it a general exposition of the events, but rather an attempt to explain the general role of the party in the course of the proletarian overthrow. I am not laying out the facts, but assume them to be generally well-known. I start with the basic proposition of the leading role of the party in the form of its vital and active organisations. I am not ignoring or keeping silent about something if, in the course of my explanation, I assume it as a given. No strained

8 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 86–88, 113, 115, 118, 129–36.

9 This appears to be a paraphrase of what he actually wrote: 'There has been talk in our press lately that we do not know the route by which the proletarian revolution will come to England: whether by the Communist Party or the trade unions' (Trotsky, Document 1, p. 131).

10 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 132.

interpretations, no sophisms can belie the fact that the main accusation made against me of minimising the significance of the party is a barefaced lie and is starkly contradicted by everything that I have actually said and demonstrated.

Just as wrong are the assertions that in my evaluation of the party I shift my attention from the party masses to the 'higher-ups', to the bosses. In this connection there has even been some kind of nonsense about a theory of 'heroes' and 'the crowd'. But still, the basic point is that, having defined the general significance of the party in the course of the proletarian overthrow, and having done it so categorically that scarcely anything can be added, I am asking the particular, partial, but extremely important question about the role of central leadership in time of revolution. This includes of course the so-called question about 'leaders'. In characterising Lenin's work in October, I twice pointed out that the force of his opposition to any vacillations derived from the fact that he could always rely on the 'party rank-and-file' at the crucial moment. Reducing the whole problem of revolution, or even just the whole problem of party leadership, to the question of 'leaders' would have fundamentally contradicted Marxism. But when, proceeding from a Marxist definition of the role of the party in the proletarian overthrow, I raised the issue of the relations between the leading centre of the party, the party as a whole, and the worker masses, as a special but extremely important issue for the revolution, this was a completely legitimate formulation of the issue, and, after last year's defeat in Germany, a doubly necessary one. I will, however, say more about this later.

I am told that the party is needed not only to seize power but also to hold on to it, to build socialism, to manoeuvre on the international stage. Surely I was aware of this? The point, however, is that the European parties still face the enormous task of taking power. They must focus and subordinate all their efforts to that end. After seizing power, new difficulties will arise. It can be confidently stated in advance that the transition from a victorious armed insurrection to 'organic' work with its necessarily slower tempo will inevitably provoke a new crisis in all or almost all parties – the isolation of a dissatisfied left wing. This will of course happen differently in different countries. But it is the danger and difficulty of the next stage. Communism will come to terms with it: it is first necessary to take power.

This same approach, namely one which is clearly biased and stretches the interpretation, marks the accusation that my discussion of the lessons of October ignores our party's past, i.e. its history before the war and before the revolution. As has already been said, though, my entire discussion leads to the conclusion that the proletariat is not able to take advantage of the most beneficial

revolutionary situation, if in the preceding, preparatory period the vanguard of the proletariat has not developed into a genuinely revolutionary, namely Bolshevik, party. This is the central lesson of October. All other lessons are secondary. The party cannot be improvised to meet the needs of the moment, or be created on the fly for an armed insurrection: this was revealed irrefutably by the experience of the European proletariat after the war. This alone completely and utterly illustrates the significance of the entire pre-October history of our party, even if I did not say a single word directly about this pre-October history. But in fact I spoke in very concrete and precise terms about the conditions of development that prepared the party for its role in and after October. Here is what I say about this on p. 62 of my introduction:

History provided our party with truly inestimable revolutionary advantages. The traditions of the heroic struggle against tsarism; the habits and methods of revolutionary self-sacrifice, bound up with the conditions of the underground; the broad theoretical examination of the revolutionary experience of all mankind; the struggle against Menshevism; the struggle against Populism; the struggle against conciliationism; the supreme experience of the 1905 revolution; the theoretical assimilation of this experience during the years of counter-revolution; the approach to the problems of the international labour movement in light of the revolutionary lessons of 1905 – taken together, these tempered our party in an exceptional way, giving it the most penetrating theoretical insight and unparalleled revolutionary sweep.¹¹

How am I 'ignoring' the party or its pre-October preparation here? It is not just that the introduction in general terms seeks to clarify the decisive significance of the preparation and tempering of the party for the proletarian overthrow, it also contains a quite precise, concrete and, despite its brevity, near exhaustive characterisation of those conditions of development that made the party what it is. Of course, I do not narrate the entire history of the party in the introduction because the subject of the book is not the history of the party but of October, i.e. a particular period in this history. But I do not know what there is to object to in my characterisation of those conditions of development of the party that provided it 'with truly inestimable revolutionary advantages'.

11 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 133–34.

But that is not all. The charge that I am 'keeping silent' about Bolshevism's struggle against the tendency I have personally defended in the past can be refuted once and for all in this case by noting that I am once again dealing not with the pre-history, not with the struggle against conciliationism before the revolution, but with October. But this argument is not needed either. For in listing those conditions which gave our party its exceptional tempering, its most penetrating theoretical insight and its unparalleled revolutionary sweep, I pointed not only to the struggle against Menshevism and Populism, but also to the struggle against conciliationism.

Nowhere in my work is there a hint of the idea that the essential nature of Bolshevism, as it emerged in its pre-revolutionary history, needed to be changed by 'Trotskyism'. On the contrary, I say directly that a necessary component of the formation of Bolshevism was the struggle against those tendencies known by the name of Trotskyism. In other words, I said precisely the opposite of what has been attributed to me. If I have not in fact belittled the role of the party, if I have not ignored the significance and meaning of its unparalleled pre-October preparation, then the entire edifice of the revived threat of Trotskyism loses its main support. Moreover, there is no hint in my work that I have belittled or ignored these things. My main idea, the axis around which everything else revolves, is noted above, and I repeat it here once more: 'We must learn to understand and value more clearly and profoundly the character, nature, significance of our own party, which secured victory for the proletariat in October and a whole series of victories since October' (*Vostok i Zapad*, p. 11).¹² That is the idea of Leninism. I am not replacing it or watering it down. I am defending and spreading it.

'The Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry'

We have seen how things stand with the 'Trotskyist' conception of the role of the party. But there are other ways of deducing my critique of Leninism, and ambiguous ones at that. First, where I characterise the 'October' position of comrade Kamenev and other comrades who came out against insurrection, I am supposedly, under the guise of criticising Lenin's opponents at that time, in fact fighting against Lenin himself. The second line of my criticism of Leninism supposedly consists of my direct account of Lenin's 'errors' in

¹² Trotsky 1968, p. 6.

October and my supposed corrections of those errors. Careful attention must be paid to both of these questions.

What was the substance of the disagreements between comrade Kamenev and Lenin in October? That comrade Kamenev was in favour of completing the bourgeois revolution under the slogan of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, while Lenin, on the grounds that the bourgeois revolution had already developed, was preparing and calling for a socialist dictatorship of the proletariat, drawing the village poor along in its wake. This was the very essence of these two tendencies in October. Lenin resolutely opposed Kamenev's formulation, rejecting as outdated the slogan of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. 'We must orientate ourselves', he said, 'not according to old formulas, but according to the new reality'.¹³ Lenin asked: 'Is this reality covered by Comrade Kamenev's old-Bolshevik formula, which says that "the bourgeois-democratic revolution is not completed?" "It is not", he replies, "The formula is obsolete. It is no good at all. It is dead. And it is no use trying to revive it"'.¹⁴ Does this mean that Lenin was simply 'renouncing' the formula of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry? Nothing of the sort. I am not trying to force such a renunciation on him at all. On the contrary, I state bluntly (p. xvii) that Lenin – as a counter to the entire pseudo-Westernising tradition of Russian Social Democracy, beginning with the Emancipation of Labour Group – gave political expression to the uniqueness of Russian history and of the Russian Revolution in the formula 'democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry', whereby for him this formula – like all other political and tactical formulas – was a thoroughly dynamic, active, and, therefore concrete, one. It was not dogma, but a guide to action.¹⁵ In the introduction, I ask: was the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry realised in the conditions of the 1917 revolution, and I reply, relying firmly on Lenin, that it was realised in the form of workers' and soldiers' soviets which held half the power but did not want all of it.¹⁶ Lenin recognised his own formulation in this much altered and refracted reality. He argued that in the current historical situation this old formula would go no further than this partial realisation. At a time when opponents of the seizure of power deemed it necessary to 'com-

13 I am unable to locate the exact quotation. Compare the following quotation: 'Events have moved it from the realm of formulas into the realm of reality' (Lenin 1964b, p. 45).

14 Lenin 1964b, p. 50.

15 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 91 ff.

16 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 95.

plete' the democratic revolution, Lenin responded that everything that could be done in the 'February' context had already been done, had already been realised; the old formula had already become outdated; a new formula for action had to be drawn from reality as it developed. Lenin accused his opponents of not recognising the 'democratic dictatorship' in the form it had been realised in the conditions of the February Revolution. As early as the start of April, Lenin relentlessly explained: 'The person who now speaks only of a "revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry" is behind the times, consequently, he has in effect gone over to the petty bourgeoisie against the proletarian class struggle; that person should be consigned to the archive of "Bolshevik" pre-revolutionary antiques (it may be called the archive of "old Bolsheviks")' (XIV, part I, p. 29).¹⁷ Lenin repeated insistently that his opponents, having pitted their outlived formula against the needs of the revolution, were thereby 'surrendering helplessly to *petty-bourgeois revolutionism*'.¹⁸ That is how Lenin presented the problem. That is precisely how I presented it as well. Why does my solidarity with Lenin, and not with comrade Kamenev, on this basic question of the October overthrow turn out to be a revision of Leninism? Why does Leninism's conception of October include Kamenev, who opposed Lenin on questions of principle, but exclude me, who marched with Lenin? Hasn't the word 'Leninism' become too flexible and self-serving here?

In order to build something like a bridge to such a completely unexpected and improbable counterposing of Leninism and anti-Leninism in October, I had to make it seem as if I saw the mistake of Kamenev and others as rooted in their Bolshevik consistency; as if I were saying: 'See, these comrades actually followed the Leninist formula through to its logical conclusion and were captivated by the petty-bourgeois revolution'. But I have never suggested that the mistake made by Lenin's October opponents lay in their 'consistent' application of the Leninist formula. No. They made the mistake of not approaching the Leninist formula in a Leninist way, and of not recognising the unique contradiction of this formula in reality: they did not understand that the 1905 formula referred to a transitional stage; using Lenin's words, they applied formulas learned by heart rather than lessons drawn from reality; in other words, they did not understand the Leninist formula in a Leninist way. Lenin himself said this and provided an exhaustive analysis of this mistake.

17 Lenin 1964b, p. 45.

18 Lenin 1964b, p. 50.

To that same end, i.e. to turn my (or rather Lenin's) criticism of comrade Kamenev and the others into a critique of Leninism by me, they had to quote from my article of 1909, not from my introduction of 1924 but from my article of 1909, in which I said that the formula of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry threatened to reveal its anti-revolutionary traits at a certain stage of the revolution. Yes, I wrote this in 1909 in Rosa Luxemburg's magazine. This article was included in my book *1905* which was reprinted repeatedly after 1917 both in Russian and in other languages, without any protests or objections from anybody, because everybody understood that the article had to be taken in the context of the period when it was written.¹⁹ But a phrase from a polemical article from 1909 should not be pasted into an introduction in 1924. As for the 1909 quotation, it is completely justifiable to say that when I wrote it, I did not appreciate that to Lenin the formula I was arguing against had no intrinsic value in itself, but applied to a preparatory stage. Such an accusation would be correct, and I would accept it. But after all, it was comrade Kamenev and others who tried – in opposition to Lenin – to turn this dynamic formula into dogma and to counterpose it to the demands of the developing revolution. Lenin himself explained to them that their stance was holding back the necessary development of the revolution. I was merely reproducing his criticism and evaluation in a condensed and much milder form. How can anyone conclude from this that I am trying to revise Leninism? Given the persistent desire to invoke a 'Trotskyism', which history put an end to a long time ago, only the following can be said: in his introduction, Trotsky shows his solidarity with the Leninist formula for the transition from the democratic revolution to the socialist one; in doing so, however, Trotsky says nothing about repudiating his old formula of permanent revolution; this must lead to the conclusion that Trotsky, on the basis of the experience of the 1917 revolution, is interpreting his old formula in a Leninist spirit. That is the only possible conclusion from this – and this cannot be done on the basis of the introduction, which does not even raise the question of the permanent revolution, as history has put an end to it – but only by comparing the introduction with my old pieces reflecting various political stages of development. And to a certain extent such a conclusion would be correct. For me, the essential element in the formula of the so-called permanent revolution was the belief that the revolution in Russia, which would begin as a bourgeois revolution, would inevitably have to be completed by a socialist dictatorship. If, as I showed above, tactic-

19 Trotsky 1972b, pp. 299–318. Like this present article, this chapter was also entitled 'Our Differences'.

ally centrist tendencies kept me apart from Bolshevism and brought me into conflict with it, then the basic political conviction that the Russian Revolution would have to transfer power to the proletariat placed me in opposition to the Mensheviks, and led me step by step into the camp of Bolshevism. But this is not relevant to the issue that occupies us. In any event, I reject as completely ridiculous the opinion that has been ascribed to me, namely that Lenin or the Bolshevik Party embraced 'my' formula of revolution after having become convinced of the erroneousness of their own formula.

I must acknowledge at the outset however that all kinds of conclusions can be drawn about Leninism being substituted with Trotskyism, if quotations from various periods over two decades are used indiscriminately, if these quotations are tossed together arbitrarily, and especially if things are attributed to me that I never said. As we know, the phrase 'No Tsar, but a workers' government' has featured more than anything else in this discussion. I think that no less than a dozen authors (and so many speakers!) one after another have attributed this incorrect political formula to me.²⁰ It has to be said, though, that the popular declaration under this heading: 'No Tsar, but a workers' government' was written in the summer of 1905 by Parvus, who was living abroad, whereas I was living illegally at that time in St. Petersburg and had no contact with him at all. This proclamation was published by a foreign publisher under the personal signature of Parvus, and was not reprinted by anyone in Russia. I have never assumed any responsibility for Parvus's simplistic formula. In this same period I wrote a series of proclamations, the most important of which were printed by a secret Bolshevik press in Baku (summer 1905). One of these proclamations was addressed specifically to the peasants. Not one of my proclamations, most of which have been located by now, called for the democratic phase of the revolution to be 'skipped over'. They all called for a Constituent Assembly and an agrarian revolution. There are plenty of these kinds of errors in the articles directed against me. But there is no point dwelling on this. The question is not how, at various stages in my political development, I personally articulated the prospects and tasks of the revolution, but whether now, in 1924, I have correctly analysed the Leninist approach to the basic issue of tactics as an integral part of the course of the October Revolution.

No one has pointed out any errors by me in this area. In my theoretical analysis of the October overthrow I remain completely faithful to Leninist

20 See, for example, in this volume, Kamenev, Document 8, p. 242; Stalin, Document 9, p. 267; Stalin, Document 16, p. 437; Bukharin, Document 20, p. 539, 542, 544; Bubnov, Document 29, p. 664.

principles, just as in the practical work of carrying out October I marched alongside Lenin.

One author has even contrived to argue that I analyse October ... according to Sukhanov, and, by way of contrast, referred to Lenin's well-known article about Sukhanov's book.²¹ Clearly Trotskyism is against Leninism! The esteemed author is wide of the mark here. On 5 February 1923, long before we knew about Lenin's review, I wrote a letter to the editors of *Pravda* in which among other things I characterised Sukhanov's book in this way: 'The other day I was leafing through one of Sukhanov's volumes of *Notes on the Revolution*.²² This book, it seems to me, demands a scathing review. It is difficult to imagine a more complete caricature of intellectual egocentrism ... First of all, he (Sukhanov) grovelled to Kerensky, then he took Tsereteli and Dan by the elbow, urging them to act most nobly, and then he preached to the Bolsheviks about how to conduct themselves in the proper revolutionary fashion. Sukhanov's sense of nobility was outraged when Lenin went into hiding after the July Days. He, Sukhanov, would never have conducted himself in that way' ... and so on, and so on. A review then appeared in *Pravda*, written in the spirit of my letter and even incorporating parts of it.²³ The reader can see how far I am inclined to analyse the revolution 'according to Sukhanov'!

Leninism and 'Blanquism'

Let us turn now to the accusation that is both most monstrously conceived and most absurdly justified: I, it would seem, am depicting Lenin as a 'Blanquist' (!!!) and myself as nothing less than the revolution's saviour from Lenin's Blanquism. Only total polemical blindness could prompt such an accusation.

But what was the pretext for this completely improbable discussion about 'Blanquism'?

In September, during the Democratic Conference, Lenin, from his hiding place in Finland, proposed to the Central Committee that the Alexandrinka, where the Democratic Conference was meeting, be surrounded, its members arrested, and the Peter and Paul Fortress occupied, etc. This plan could not yet be carried out in the name of the Petrograd Soviet in September because the

21 Bukharin, Document 20, p. 550; cf. Stalin, Document 9, p. 269; Zinoviev, Document 11, p. 338.

22 Sukhanov 1922–3. An abridged version of Sukhanov's multivolume work has appeared in English (Sukhanov 1984).

23 M.T., 'Vospominaniia prekrasnogo nartsissa', *Pravda*, no. 34, 15 February 1923, p. 5.

Soviet organisation had not been Bolshevised enough yet and was therefore not ready: The Military Revolutionary Committee did not yet exist. 'This formulation', as my book says about Lenin's September proposal, 'presupposed that the insurrection would be prepared and carried out by and in the name of the party, and that the victory would be sanctioned by the Congress of Soviets'.²⁴ For some reason, several comrades concluded from this that I regarded Lenin's September proposal as Blanquism (!!!). I just do not get this: what has Blanquism got to do with it? Blanquism means striving for power in the name of a revolutionary minority that is not based on the working class. Yet the entire crux of the situation in September was that a majority of the working people was behind our party and that this majority was clearly growing. So the question was whether the Central Committee of the party that had the majority behind it should take on the task of organising the armed insurrection, seize power, convene the Congress of Soviets and thereby sanction the overthrow after it had already been achieved. To speak of Blanquism vis-à-vis this proposal is a monstrous distortion of the meaning of basic political conceptions. Insurrection is an art: the problem of insurrection allows for various solutions, some of which might be more successful, some less successful. Lenin's September proposal had the undoubted advantage of allowing for the enemy to be caught off guard, and of denying it the chance to rally its loyal troops and launch a counter-offensive. The drawback of the September proposal lay in the fact that, to a certain degree, it might catch off guard not only the enemy but also some of the workers and the garrison, sowing confusion in their ranks, and thereby weakening our campaign. This was an important, if purely practical, concern, and had nothing to do with any conflict of principle between Blanquism and Marxism. It is well-known that the Central Committee did not adopt Lenin's September proposal and I voted together with everyone else on this question. It was a question here not about the general definition of the overall course of development and not about any conflict between Blanquism (!!!) and Marxism, but about the concrete analysis of completely practical, even largely technical, questions of the insurrection, the political prerequisites for which were already in place. It was in this sense that I meant that Lenin had to judge the purely practical conditions of the Petrograd situation 'from the underground'. These words have provoked completely unexpected protestations. By the way, here too I have only repeated what Vladimir Il'ich himself has said and written on this. At the Third Congress of the Comintern he wrote 'to console' several Hungarian comrades whom he had treated harshly on the eve of the congress for

24 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 120.

their extreme 'leftist' position: 'When I was an émigré myself ... I took "too Leftist" a stand several times ... In August 1917, I was also an émigré and moved in our Party Central Committee a much too "Leftist" proposal which, happily, was flatly rejected. It is quite natural for émigrés frequently to adopt attitudes which are "too Leftist"'.²⁵ We see that Vladimir Il'ich called his own plan too leftist and attributed his 'leftism' to being stranded in the situation of an émigré at that time. Here too, then, I have presented Lenin's analysis.

Nevertheless, although it was rejected by the CC, this plan had a positive effect on the course of events. Lenin knew that there would be no lack of caution, circumspection, and general inhibition, and so he pressed on with all his might, endeavouring to make each individual responsible party worker and all of them together approach the armed insurrection as a practical task that must not be delayed. Lenin's September letter, which had nothing in common with Blanquism (!!!), became part of the systematic influence he exerted on the party, and it was expedient in forcing it to grapple with the problems of the insurrection in a more concrete, firm, and bold manner.

Closely linked to this was another crucial episode of the October overthrow, namely Kerensky's attempt to withdraw the Petrograd garrison. I am dwelling on this episode not because I have anything new to add to what has already been said on this, but because my account of this episode gave comrade Kamenev the pretext to maintain that I was counterposing my own 'correct' policy on this issue to Lenin's 'incorrect' (Blanquist) policy. I will not reproduce here all the truly repugnant conclusions and insinuations that have been made about this. I re-read the relevant part of my introduction, certain in advance of course that it contained no hint of what has been attributed to me. But I found something even better in my introduction: a passage which quite precisely and abruptly precludes any possibility of falsely interpreting any 'special' strategic plan on my part vis-à-vis the Petrograd garrison. This is what I said in the introduction:

When we Bolsheviks came to power in the Petrograd Soviet, we continued and deepened the methods of dual power. We took it upon ourselves to review the garrison's transfer order. In this way, we disguised the actual insurrection of the Petrograd garrison with the traditions and methods of legal dual power. Furthermore, by formally deferring the question of power in our agitation until the Second Congress of Soviets, we developed

25 There is a misprint in these lines: the plan mentioned here was written not in August, but in September [original footnote]. [Lenin 1970, p. 203].

and deepened the already existing traditions of dual power, and prepared the framework of Soviet legality for the Bolshevik insurrection across all of Russia.

p. 50²⁶

This account is offered not in the name of an individual but in the name of the party ('we Bolsheviks'). Subsequently, the struggle over the garrison develops not from any kind of plan at all but from the regime of dual power we inherited from the SRs and Mensheviks. Kerensky wanted to move the garrison out; traditionally this should not be done without consulting the soldiers' section of the Soviet, without the General Staff appealing to the Presidium of the soldiers' section, but the Bolsheviks were already firmly ensconced there, and a conflict arose which, as it developed further, was fraught with such momentous consequences for the October overthrow. So that is how I described the matter of the garrison, completely in keeping with the actual course of events. But that is still not everything. As if intentionally trying to preclude the possibility of any misleading interpretations like comrade Kamenev's, I state bluntly later on: 'If our "cunning" proved one hundred percent successful, it was not because it was an artful scheme thought up by crafty strategists who wanted to avoid a civil war, but because it derived naturally from the disintegration of the conciliationist regime, from its blatant contradictions' (p. 51).²⁷ By the way, the word 'cunning' is in quotation marks to show that it is not any kind of individual cunning but the result of the objective development of circumstances emerging from dual power. The introduction directly states that there was 'no artful scheme thought up by crafty strategists'. And so, not only is the account given in the name of the party, i.e. its representation in the Soviet, it is stated directly and clearly that individual schemes or personal cunning had no place here. What then is the basis for the assertion that I am extolling my own policies here at the expense of Lenin's? There is no such basis at all. Of course, being in Finland, Lenin could not know about this episode as it emerged, and could not follow all the stages of its development. It might be supposed that if Lenin had known in good time all the details, from his own personal observations, about the matter of the Petrograd garrison, he might have been less anxious about the course of the overthrow. But that would in no way have stopped him of course from exerting all the pressure that he did exert. He was undoubtedly right to demand that power be seized before the convening of the Congress of Soviets, and this occurred precisely because of his pressure.

26 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 123.

27 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 123.

'The Combined Type of State'

The differences over October hinged on the question of armed insurrection for the seizure of power. Without a thorough understanding of Lenin's formulation of this issue, these differences are of course impossible to understand. Moreover, I now want to offer an example of major significance in today's discussion to show that many comrades who are accusing me of retreating from Leninism are in fact poorly acquainted with Lenin and have not carefully thought through his approach to the question of the seizure of power.

In the introduction I mention in passing that the authors of 'On the Current Situation', having come out against the seizure of power, were forced to adopt approximately the same position that had been taken at a certain point in the German revolution of 1918–19 by the then leader of Independent Social Democracy, Hilferding, who proposed that the Soviets be included in the democratic constitution.²⁸ My analogy was fiercely criticised. I was accused, first, of equating, completely incorrectly and even in 'bad faith', comrade Kamenev's position with Hilferding's position; at the same time I was told that Lenin too made statements along the lines of combining the Soviets with the Constituent Assembly and that, consequently, I am again revising Leninism. I have been accused of not understanding the transitional period when the party was fighting for the power of the Soviets but had not yet given up on the Constituent Assembly. Finally, I am criticised for the fact that, while agitating for Soviet power, I still spoke about convening a Constituent Assembly. However, the main charge, as in all the other cases, was that I equated Lenin's position with Hilferding's position: a revision of Leninism, a belittling of Leninism. Let's see if this was so. Clarification of this crucial episode will throw into sharp relief the differences in 1917 as well.

At that time the party was indeed fighting for both Soviet power and the convening of the Constituent Assembly. One of the most popular agitational slogans was that if power was not seized by the Soviets, the Constituent Assembly would not be convened, and if it were convened it would become a tool of the counter-revolution. That was how Lenin and the party put it: the road to the Constituent Assembly led not through the Provisional Government and the Preparliament, but through the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry. This Constituent Assembly would not be an expanded version of the Preparliament but a constituent part of the workers' and peasants' state. This was the crux of the matter. Those who opposed the seizure of power responded

28 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 110–11.

to Lenin's path of insurrection with – hopes for a Constituent Assembly. They argued (see the letter 'On the Current Situation') that the bourgeoisie 'would not dare' to prevent the Constituent Assembly from convening and would not be in a position to rig the elections to it. They argued that our party would be a strong opposition in the Constituent Assembly, with about a third of the votes. This led them to the following position: 'The Soviets, which have become an intimate part of life (?), cannot be destroyed ... Only on the Soviets can the Constituent Assembly base its revolutionary work (?). The Constituent Assembly and the Soviets are the combined form of state institutions towards which we are moving'.²⁹ Thus the combined type of statehood means that power, as exercised through the Provisional Government, the Preparliament, and the Constituent Assembly convened by them, is still in the hands of the bourgeois classes. We play the role of the opposition in the Constituent Assembly and at the same time remain the leading party in the Soviets. In other words, here was the prospect of continuing dual power, which was a possibility for a certain time under the professional class conciliators, the Mensheviks and SRs, but which became absolutely impossible in a situation where the Bolsheviks held a majority in the Soviets but a minority in the Constituent Assembly.

Of course, Lenin's position had nothing to do with this. He said: first we will take power, then we will convene the Constituent Assembly and, if necessary, combine it with the Soviets. How was Lenin's position different from that of the authors of the letter 'On the Current Situation'? On the fundamental question of revolution: the question of power. For Lenin, both the Constituent Assembly and the Soviets were organs of one and the same class, or of an alliance between the non-propertied classes (the proletariat and the village poor); for Lenin, the question of combining the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets was a technical, organisational one. For his opponents, the Soviets represented a single class (the proletariat and the poor peasantry), while the Constituent Assembly remained the organ of the propertied classes. It would only be possible to work towards this kind of combined type on the basis of delusional hopes that the powerless Soviets would be a 'revolver at the bourgeoisie's head', and that the bourgeoisie would 'combine' its policies with them.³⁰ Herein lay the similarity with the position of Hilferding, who at the time of his most leftist views opposed the dictatorship of the proletariat, and proposed including the Soviets in the constitution as a way of pressuring the propertied classes, namely as a revolver that cannot be fired!

29 'K tekushchemu momentu', in *Protokoly* 1958, p. 88.

30 'K tekushchemu momentu', in *Protokoly* 1958, p. 87.

Or is this still unclear? Then let us turn to the witness and interpreter who carries the most authority for all of us. Let us turn to Lenin. If my critics had done this in a timely and attentive manner, they would have spared the readers a great deal of confusion. Let us open Volume XIV and find the following truly remarkable lines in 'Letter to Comrades' (16–17 October):

There is no way for our sad pessimists to turn. A renunciation of the uprising is a renunciation of the transfer of power to the Soviets and implies a 'transfer' of all hopes and expectations to the kind bourgeoisie, which has 'promised' to convoke the Constituent Assembly. Is it so difficult to understand that once power is in the hands of the Soviets, the Constituent Assembly and its success are *guaranteed*? The Bolsheviks have said so thousands of times and *no one* has ever attempted to refute it. Everybody has recognised this 'combined type', but to smuggle in a *renunciation* of the transfer of power to the Soviets under cover of the words 'combined type', to smuggle it in *secretly* while *fearing* to renounce our slogan openly is a matter for wonder. Is there any parliamentary term to describe it? Someone has very pointedly retorted to our pessimist: 'Is it a revolver with no cartridges?' If so, it means going over directly to the Lieberdans, who have declared the Soviets a 'revolver' thousands of times and have deceived the people thousands of times. For *while they were in control* the Soviets proved to be worthless. If, however, it is to be a revolver 'with cartridges', this cannot mean anything but *technical* preparation for an uprising; the cartridges have to be procured, the revolver has to be loaded – and cartridges alone will not be enough. Either go over to the side of the Lieberdans and *openly* renounce the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets', or start the uprising. There is no middle course.

pp. 271–6³¹

When you read these striking lines, it seems as if Lenin is simply adding his voice to the current discussion. Not waiting for any further explanation from anyone, Lenin declared that, under the formula of the combined type, political ideas were being 'smuggled in' which directly contradicted those which he, Lenin, defended. And when in my introduction I repeated very mildly Lenin's idea of a 'combined form of state institutions'³² on the basis of dual power, critics declared that I, under the banner of Leninism, was smuggling in ... 'Trotsky-

31 Lenin 196400, p. 200.

32 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 110.

ism'. Isn't this shocking?! Doesn't this expose the whole mechanism by which the 'Trotskyist' danger has been constructed in the party? If by 'Trotskyism' (in the old pre-war sense) is understood the reconciliation of fundamentally irreconcilable tendencies, then it would without doubt be theoretically correct to apply this sense of the term 'Trotskyism' to the combined type of statehood, without the seizure of power. But it was not I who advocated that 'Trotskyism'. And it is not I who now defends it in retrospect against Lenin.

I assume and hope that the issue is now clear. In any event it is beyond my power to make it any clearer. It is not possible to say anything more clearly on Lenin's behalf than he has said for himself. And they still reproach me with the claim that even Communist Youth members have grasped my mistake. Alas, following the path of several old comrades, the Communist Youth members have shown only that they have either poorly read or poorly understood Lenin on the fundamental question of the October Revolution: the question of power.

The quotation from Lenin, which sums up our dispute about the 'combined type' so well, comes from mid-October, i.e. he wrote it ten days before the insurrection. But Lenin came back to this issue later. With ruthless theoretical clarity, Lenin articulated the revolutionary Marxist position on this issue on 26 December 1917, i.e. two and a half months after the aforementioned 'Letter to Comrades'. The October insurrection was already far in the past. Power was already in the hands of the Soviets. And yet Lenin, who was not in the habit of artificially reviving old disagreements from the past, unless it was absolutely necessary, felt it necessary on 26 December, i.e. before the convening of the Constituent Assembly, to return to this controversial issue. This is what we read on this issue in his 'Theses on the Constituent Assembly':

Every direct or indirect attempt to consider the question of the Constituent Assembly from a formal, legal point of view, within the framework of ordinary bourgeois democracy and disregarding the class struggle and civil war, would be a betrayal of the proletariat's cause, and the adoption of the bourgeois standpoint. The revolutionary Social-Democrats are duty bound to warn all and sundry against this error, into which a few Bolshevik leaders, who have been unable to appreciate the significance of the October uprising and the tasks of the dictatorship of the proletariat, have strayed.

v. xv, p. 53³³

33 Lenin 1964pp, pp. 382–3.

Clearly, Lenin saw his clear duty to warn each and every person about the error revealed in the dispute over the 'combined' type of statehood. He felt it necessary to make such a warning, very harsh in tone, two months after the victorious insurrection. We can see, however, that the meaning of this warning has been half-forgotten, half-distorted, by certain comrades. Still, in an international context – and therefore also for us – it retains all of its force even today. After all, all communist parties have yet to confront the experience of actually overthrowing the democratic state. This is an enormously difficult task; in the old democratic countries, it is a thousand times more difficult than it was for us. Formally, all communists adopt the position of 'rejecting' formal democracy. But that does not really solve the problem. The main problem still remains: how to overthrow by revolutionary means a democracy that has deeply penetrated national customs, to overthrow it in practice. In this way bourgeois-democratic public opinion exerts a most powerful resistance which must be understood and assessed beforehand. This resistance inevitably penetrates the communist parties themselves as well, creating corresponding groupings in them. There can be no doubt from the outset that the most widespread, common, typical form of 'conciliationism' with bourgeois democracy is precisely the idea of 'combined statehood' – avoiding the insurrection and the seizure of power. This flows naturally from the entire situation, from all the traditions, from the whole interrelationship of classes. This is why it is necessary to 'warn each and every person' about this inevitable danger, which could prove fatal for less tempered parties. This is why it is necessary to tell our European comrades: 'Look, here in Russia, with our outstanding party, illusions about democracy, even when they are cast in a unique light, captured the consciousness of prominent revolutionaries at the crucial moment; for you, the risk is incomparably higher; be ready for it; study the experience of October; contemplate it in all its revolutionary concreteness: make it part of your flesh and blood!' These kinds of warnings do not mean I am replacing Leninism. No, this means serving it faithfully and truthfully.

Comrade Zinoviev asks: was the pre-October and October opposition to the seizure of power a rightist grouping, or rightist trend, or a right wing? To this question, which apparently is not a question at all, comrade Zinoviev answers no. His reply is purely formulaic: the Bolshevik Party is monolithic and therefore it could have had no right wing in October. But it is quite obvious that the Bolshevik Party is not monolithic in the sense that rightist tendencies could not emerge in it, it is monolithic in the sense that it always managed to deal with them: it sometimes expelled them, sometimes assimilated them. So it was in the October period. There is apparently nothing to argue about here: as soon as the overthrow came to fruition, opposition to the overthrow

appeared in the party, and this was an opposition from the right, not from the left. As Marxists we cannot restrict ourselves to a purely psychological characterisation of the opposition: 'vacillation', 'doubt', 'indecisiveness', and so on. After all, this vacillation was political in nature, nothing more. After all, this vacillation was counter to the struggle of the proletariat for power. After all, this opposition was given a grounding in theory and carried out with political slogans. How can an internal opposition in the party not be characterised politically, an opposition which comes out against the seizure of power by the proletariat at the crucial moment? And why refrain from making such a political characterisation? I just refuse to understand this. Of course, perhaps the question can be asked in terms of psychology or personality, for example: is it accidental or intentional that this or that comrade turned out to be among those opposed to the seizure of power? I did not touch on this question at all, for it is not germane to the evaluation of the tendencies in the development of the party. The fact that some comrades could measure their opposition in months, and others in weeks, has only personal, biographical significance and does not affect the political evaluation of their stance. This was a reflection of the pressure exerted on the party by bourgeois public opinion at a time when mortal peril was gathering above the heads of bourgeois society. Lenin accused the representatives of the opposition of displaying a 'fatal' optimism about the bourgeoisie, and 'pessimism' about the revolutionary forces and capabilities of the proletariat (XIV, part II, p. 276).³⁴ It is simply necessary to re-read Lenin's letters, articles, and speeches on this period, and everyone will be easily convinced that a red thread runs through them, characterising the opposition as a rightist deviation and as a reflection of the bourgeoisie's pressure on the party on the eve of the conquest of power. This characterisation is not limited to just a single period of immediate, bitter struggle against the right opposition, but is repeated by Lenin considerably later as well. Thus, at the end of February 1918, i.e. four months after the October overthrow, during the 'ferocious' struggle against the Left Communists, Lenin called the October opposition 'opportunists of October'.³⁵ Of course, this evaluation can be attacked as well: could there be opportunists in the monolithic Bolshevik opposition? Of course, that kind of formulaic argument is to no avail in a political evaluation. And Lenin made the political evaluation, he substantiated it, and it was generally recognised in the party. I do not know why it is now being brought into doubt.

34 Lenin 196400, pp. 200–1.

35 Lenin 1965b, p. 26.

Why is the correct political evaluation of the October opposition important? Because it has international implications; it will acquire its full significance only in the future. Here we come right up against one of the main lessons of our October, and this lesson today takes on new, enormous significance after the negative experience of the German October. We will encounter this lesson in every proletarian revolution.

Of the many difficulties of the proletarian overthrow, one is absolutely definite, concrete, and specific: it is the result of the work of a revolutionary party leadership. At a critical turn of events, even the most revolutionary parties, Lenin repeated, run the risk of being left behind, and of pitting yesterday's slogans or methods of struggle against new tasks, new demands. And in general there can be no more critical turn of events than one that creates the need for armed insurrection by the proletariat. In this instance, the danger arises of a disjuncture between the party leadership, the policies of the party in toto, and the behaviour of the class. Under 'normal' conditions, i.e. when political life is proceeding relatively slowly, such disjunctures can have detrimental effects, although not catastrophic ones. But in times of severe revolutionary crisis there is not enough time to eliminate the disjuncture and, so to speak, realign the front while under fire. The periods of the most intense revolutionary crisis are, by definition, fleeting. A disjuncture between the revolutionary leadership (wavering, vacillation, playing the waiting game ...) and the objective tasks of the revolution can sometimes in the course of a few weeks, even days, lead to catastrophe, to the squandering of what years of work has prepared. Of course, a disjuncture between the leadership and the party (the class, the whole situation) can also have the opposite character: that is when the leadership races ahead of the revolution's development, mistaking the fifth month of pregnancy for the ninth. We saw the most glaring example of just such a disjuncture in Germany in March 1921. There we had in the party a most extreme manifestation of 'the infantile disorder of leftism',³⁶ and, as a result – putchism [*puchizm*] (revolutionary adventurism). This is a very real danger in the future as well. The lessons of the Third Congress of the Comintern therefore retain all their force. But last year's German experience showed us with bitter clarity the opposite danger: the situation had matured but the leadership lagged behind. While the leadership is endeavouring to catch up with the situation, the situation changes: the masses fade away and the constellation of forces deteriorates sharply. Last year's German defeat had of course very nationalist aspects, but it also had some deeply typical features which

36 See Lenin 1966b, pp. 17–118.

betoken a general danger. It can be called a crisis of revolutionary leadership. The rank-and-file of the proletarian party is far less susceptible to the pressure of bourgeois-democratic public opinion, although certain elements in the upper ranks and middle strata of the party will inevitably, to a greater or lesser extent, give in to the material and ideological terror of the bourgeoisie at the crucial moment. This danger cannot simply be dismissed. Of course there is no kind of antidote against this danger that is suitable for all occasions. But the first step in the fight against any danger is to understand the source and nature of that danger. The appearance (or development) of a rightist grouping in every Communist Party in an 'October' period reflects on the one hand the greatest objective difficulties and dangers, and on the other the furious pressure of bourgeois public opinion. This is the essential significance of a rightist grouping. For this very reason therefore, vacillation and wavering inevitably emerge in communist parties at precisely the moment when they are the most dangerous. In our party, these vacillations and frictions were minimal. This gave us the chance to accomplish October. At the opposite pole is the German Communist Party which missed a revolutionary situation, and the internal crisis in the party was so acute that it led to a complete renewal of the leadership apparatus of the party. In all probability, all communist parties will fall somewhere between these two extremes in their own 'October' period. Reducing the inevitable crises of revolutionary leadership to a minimum is one of the most important tasks of every Communist Party and of the Comintern as a whole. This can be achieved simply by understanding our October experience, by understanding the political content of the opposition to October within our party.

Problems of the Present

To shift from the evaluations and lessons of the past to current problems, I will begin with a particular but extremely clear and sharp accusation which was so unexpected that it shocked me.

One of my critics went so far as to say that in my memoir I placed the 'responsibility' (??) for the Red Terror on Lenin.³⁷ What exactly could that idea

37 This may refer to the passage where Trotsky recounts Lenin's scoffing at those who were 'incapable of shooting a White Guard saboteur', and that with those kinds of statements 'Lenin was hammering in the realization that extremely stern measures would be inevitable for the safety of the revolution' (see Trotsky 1971, p. 124).

mean? It apparently speaks of some kind of need to absolve myself of responsibility for the terror as a weapon of revolutionary struggle. But where might such a need come from? I cannot understand this, either politically or psychologically. It is true that bourgeois governments, which have come to power through revolution, aristocratic coup, conspiracy and so on, have always felt the need to shroud in forgetfulness the conditions of their accession to power. Embellishing and falsifying their own 'illegal' past, erasing from it memories of the bloody force that was used, become mainstays of the work of bourgeois governments that came to power through violence, after they have managed to consolidate and strengthen their position and developed the required conservative habits. But how and why might such a need arise among proletarian revolutionaries? We have existed as a state for more than seven years, we have diplomatic relations even with the ultra-conservative government of Great Britain, we receive titled ambassadors, but we do not retreat one iota from the methods that brought our party to power and that the October Revolution introduced into the mighty arsenal of the world revolutionary movement. We have as little reason now to retreat from or be silent about the methods of revolutionary force we used as we did in those days when we were forced to use them to save the revolution. Yes, we receive titled ambassadors, and we permit private capitalist trade, on the basis of which a *Sukharevka* market-type public opinion [*Sukharevskoe obshchestvennoe mnenie*] has been re-established. Of course, this All-Russian *Sukharevka*, which is forced to submit to Soviet power, dreams hopefully that the Soviet government, which came to power by ultra-'illegal' and 'barbaric' means, will become nobler in spirit and will become a genuine, 'civilised', 'honourable', democratic, that is to say conservative bourgeois, power. Under these conditions, not only our own underdeveloped bourgeoisie but also the international bourgeoisie would willingly forgive Soviet power for its 'illegitimate' origins, if they were sure that we would stop reminding people about them. But as we do not intend to change our class essence one iota, and as we keep our revolutionary suspicion of bourgeois public opinion fully intact, there is no reason at all to repudiate our past, to 'cast off' our responsibility for the Red Terror. It is a completely unworthy idea to want to cast off this responsibility – onto Lenin. Who could 'cast off' this responsibility onto him? He has already assumed it. October, overthrow, revolution, Red Terror, Civil War – he has assumed responsibility for all of this in the eyes of the working class and of history, and he will bear it 'for evermore'. Or perhaps we are talking here about overreaching, about excesses? Where exactly have revolutions ever been carried out without 'overreaching' and without excesses? How many times did Lenin explain this simple idea to the philistines who were horrified by the excesses of April, July and October! Nothing and no one can

take away Lenin's responsibility for the Red Terror. Not even his overly servile 'defenders'. The Red Terror was a necessary tool of the revolution. It would have failed without it. Revolutions have often perished because of the spinelessness, indecisiveness, and amiability of the toiling masses. Even our party, despite all its previous tempering, bore within itself these elements of good will and lack of revolutionary concern. Nobody had thought through in advance the immeasurable difficulties of the revolution, its internal and external dangers, like Lenin. Nobody had understood so clearly even before the overthrow that, without reprisals against the propertied classes, without the harshest terror measures in history, proletarian power, surrounded by enemies on all sides, would never survive. Lenin imparted this understanding, and the concentrated will to fight that flowed from it, drop by drop to his closest collaborators, and through them and with them to the whole party and toiling masses. I spoke about precisely this in my memoir. I describe how Lenin, in the first moments of the revolution, seeing everywhere carelessness, lack of concern, and baseless self-confidence in the face of looming dangers and disasters, taught his collaborators at every step that the revolution can be saved only if it becomes more serious and takes up the sword of the Red Terror. I spoke about this in my memoir as well. About Lenin's great perspicacity, about his great strength of spirit, about his revolutionary ruthlessness – all the while maintaining his great personal humanity. To look for anything else in my words, to see in them a desire to lay responsibility for the terror at Lenin's doorstep, can only be a result of political obtuseness and petty psychologism.

If I wanted to throw around poisonous suspicions as easily as some of my critics do, I would say: do not look for 'NEP' tendencies in me but in precisely those who could get into their heads the idea of renouncing the Red Terror. And if some of those *Sukharevka* bastards seriously believed these and similar accusations and began to build their hopes on them, then this would mean only that my accusers are raising a spectre of Trotskyism applicable to *Sukharevka* – but this does not mean that there is any similarity at all between this spectre and me.



Arguments based on the *Sukharevka* idea, whether domestic or émigré, must generally be used with the utmost caution. Of course, enemies of all stripes delight in our every disagreement, every discussion, and they endeavour to widen every breach. But to draw one or another conclusion from their evaluations, we must check the following: first, do they know what they are talking about, for only a serious, business-like and stable evaluation by an intelligent

enemy can have real significance; and second, are they making their evaluations specifically in order to stoke our disagreements, by pouring fuel on the fire of the discussion? This applies especially to the émigré press, which has no direct political goals of its own for it has no mass readership and which trades mainly on finding echoes of its opinions in the Soviet press.

I will offer one example, but a telling one I think. Our press has reported that during last year's discussion the Menshevik *Sotsialisticheskii vestnik* [*Socialist Courier*] placed great hopes in the 'opposition' or in individual elements of it. I have not verified this report, but I completely concede that such perspicacious realists as Dan and Co., who all their lives have wagered on the democratisation of the bourgeoisie, are now betting on the Menshevisation of the Bolshevik Party. However, quite by chance I came across issue 7 of the right-wing Menshevik publication *Zaria* [*Dawn*], and in an article by St. Ivanovich I found the following criticism directed at Dan and Co.'s hopes for a change in the Bolshevik party:

Perhaps they (Dan and Co.) know something about the opposition that nobody else knows. But if they only know what everybody else knows, then they must be aware that it is precisely among the opposition inside the RKP that there can be found the most utopian supporters of the dictatorship, its most rigidly orthodox adherents, whose influence manifested itself in the recent outbursts of leftist fury, in the anti-NEP course, and so on. In what way can these orthodox defenders of 'October' produce, in the words of the platform, 'elements capable, because of their situation, ... of playing a significant role in the business of preparing the democratic liquidation of the dictatorship?' The platform finds that all this can be carried out 'under the pressure of workers' movement which is developing and attaining class consciousness'. But this is a completely arbitrary hypothesis, and one contradicted by reality itself even before it made it into the platform. Precisely under the influence of a long spell of wild strikes, sometimes even with political demands, the opposition in the RKP demanded a strengthening of the dictatorship, bourgeois blood, and a new course. Life has shown that the opposition throws up the most ardent demagogues of the dictatorship, yet the platform expects democratic elements to come from this. How irrational for life to deviate so much from the platform!.

p. 197³⁸

38 St. Ivanovich, 'Platforma mirnogo obnoveniia', *Zaria*, no. 7, 1924, p. 197.

It is with real disgust that, in a piece devoted to the internal problems of our party, I reproduce this quotation from a White Menshevik scoundrel. I have no intention of drawing any political conclusions from this quotation other than this: beware of the reviews and judgements of émigrés! Beware of poorly excerpted judgements from the European bourgeois press! It is always useful to consider the views of one's enemies. But this must be done critically, and the enemy must not be attributed more perspicacity than he actually has. Let us not forget that the international capitalist press has often declared in the course of the Soviet regime that Lenin was striving to put Russia back onto a national conservative track, but that the 'leftists' were stopping him from doing that, with Bukharin, Zinoviev and the author of these lines being included in that group. Surely these ideas were indicative of nothing more than the dim-wittedness of bourgeois thinking when faced with the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship? It is particularly intolerable for us first to lead astray the bourgeois press, tormented by its hopes and desires, with our own biased, artificial accusations, and then present its distorted reflection of our words as a convincing bourgeois evaluation. In that way we present as reality the shadow of a spectre of our own making!



So as to give some kind of currency (topical interest) to the spectre of 'Trotskyism', which has been constructed by combining old quotations, some critics, notably comrade Zinoviev, have raised – in a very general and indefinite way, it is true – questions of current, internal politics. I have not stirred up discussion on any of these questions. Comrade Zinoviev does not refer to any specific clashes on these questions. My introduction does not provide any pretext for a discussion of these questions. Nowhere have I disputed the decisions of the Thirteenth Congress, and I have carried them out in all of my work. But somehow or other my introduction has been interpreted not within the context of the defeat of the German revolution but in the context of last year's discussion. My introduction has thus served as a pretext for raising the question about my 'line' in general.

Comrade Zinoviev puts forward a whole series of points which in his view characterise my line as a line directed against the party's line.

I am apparently trying to weaken the leading role of the party in the state. I cannot accept this accusation at all. To address this general issue in quite specific terms, I will remind everyone that in a number of recent decrees the CC once again and quite categorically has expressed itself against the idea of local organs of Soviet power being substituted with party organs. Is this likely

to weaken the role of the party? No, carrying out this line correctly can only strengthen and consolidate the role of the party. Of course, within this context there can be practical disagreements. However, comrade Zinoviev can offer no new examples of even purely practical disagreements, because there have been none in our actual work.

Nor can I accept in the slightest the accusation that I am striving to transform the party into a collection of factions and groupings – in the spirit of the British Labour Party. It goes without saying that this assertion is a caricature. Whether my understanding of the October lessons is correct or incorrect, it is simply impossible to see my book about October as the tool of a factional grouping. This was not my aim and it could not be my aim. In general, it is ridiculous to think that in a ruling mass party a 'grouping' can be created on the basis of historical interpretations!

I will not dwell on questions of 'specialists' [*spetsy*], finances, the State Planning Commission and so on and so forth, as I see no material there for 'discussion' and I have given no cause at all to raise these questions once again.

The question remains of course about my underestimation of the peasantry, apparently the major source of my errors, real and imagined. I will not speak of the past, as this would lead us into an endless maze. I will not go into the fact that my Brest-Litovsk mistake derived not from my 'ignoring' the peasantry (I did not count on a revolutionary war from its side), but from my hopes for a more rapid development of the revolutionary movement in Germany. But with the present and the future in mind, I feel I must address this basic, amorphous, but persistent accusation.

I cannot however ignore the completely outrageous distortions of Brest-Litovsk history offered by Kuusinen.³⁹ He puts it like this: having left for Brest-Litovsk with a directive from the party to sign the treaty in the event of an ultimatum, I wilfully violated this directive and refused to sign. This lie is beyond the pale. I went to Brest-Litovsk with one task: to drag out the negotiations for as long as possible, but, in the event of an ultimatum, to negotiate an adjournment and return to Moscow to take part in the CC decision. Only comrade Zinoviev proposed that I be given a directive to sign the treaty immediately. But this was rejected by all the other votes, including Lenin's. All agreed of course that dragging out the negotiations further would worsen the terms of the treaty, but all felt that this drawback was outweighed by the propaganda benefits. What did I do at Brest-Litovsk? When the issue of the ultimatum came up, I negotiated

39 Kuusinen, Document 12, p. 386.

a break in the negotiations, returned to Moscow, and the issue was decided by the CC. It was not I personally who decided not to sign the peace, but a majority of the CC at my suggestion. That was also the decision of a majority of the All-Russian Party Conference. I returned to Brest-Litovsk for the final time with the crystal clear decision of the party: not to sign the treaty. All this can be easily checked against the minutes of the CC. Kuusinen has crudely distorted the history of Brest-Litovsk. I will allow however that there was no malice here, simply a lack of knowledge and understanding.

Above all, it is necessary to reject the caricatured idea that the formula of 'permanent revolution' was some kind of fetish or article of faith for me, from which I have drawn all my political conclusions and deductions, especially about the peasantry. There is not a shadow of truth in this idea. After I had written about the permanent revolution with the aim of clarifying for myself the future course of development of revolutionary events, many years passed, an entire revolution happened, and the richest experience of the Soviet state unfolded. Surely people do not seriously think that my current attitude to the peasantry is determined not by the collective experience of our party and by my personal experience, but by theoretical recollections of how I thought the Russian Revolution might develop in such and such a year? After all, we experienced and learned from the period of the imperialist war, the Kerensky era [*Kerenshchina*], the Land Committees, the peasant congress, the struggle against the Right SRs; the ceaseless meetings of soldiers' delegates in Smolnyi where we fought for influence over the armed peasant; the experience of the Brest-Litovsk peace, when a significant part of the party, led by Old Bolsheviks who had no connection with 'permanent revolution', counted on revolutionary war and taught the entire party much from the experience of their mistake; the period of building the Red Army, when the party, through a series of experiments and approaches, created a military alliance between the worker and the peasant; the period of grain requisitioning and bitter class conflicts on the basis of that ... Then the party set its sights on the middle peasant, and this gradually brought about a significant change in the orientation of the party, on the same foundation of principle of course; then the transition took place to free trade in grain and to the NEP – with all the consequences this brought. Surely we cannot place on one side of the scales this entire enormous historical experience which strengthens us all, and on the other side the old formula of permanent revolution which supposedly has led me always, everywhere, and under all conditions, to underestimate the peasantry? This is wrong, unrealistic. I categorically reject this kind of theological attitude to the formula of permanent revolution. This very formula reflects a stage of development we passed through a long time ago. It is dragged out and

inflated only because it is otherwise difficult to justify today's allegation that I 'underestimated the peasantry' and to conjure up the spectre of 'Trotskyism'.

In his article on the Worker-Peasant Inspectorate (Rabkrin), Lenin wrote that the fundamental political danger that could under certain conditions cause a split in the party was the danger of a rift between the proletariat and the peasantry, the two basic classes, whose collaboration is indispensable to the preservation and development of the gains of October.⁴⁰ If we approach this danger from the viewpoint of the interests of these two basic classes, we must say the following: only by maintaining a certain balance between the material interests of the workers and the peasants can the political stability of the Soviet state be guaranteed. The ruling party must achieve this balance in constantly changing conditions, for the economic level of the country varies, the contribution made to the whole by each partner varies, the amount private capital steals from each of them varies, and the share each partner receives from his common labour varies. Under these conditions, what might it really mean to underestimate the peasantry or to pay insufficient attention to it? It might mean that the proletariat, the leader in the alliance, in its striving via the party to secure its own foundation, namely industry, as quickly as possible, or to raise the level of culture, places an excessive burden on the peasant. This could cause a political breach, the initiative for which in this case could be taken by the peasantry. We have frequently characterised this kind of impatient and narrow tendency, insofar as it has manifested itself, as shop-floor [*tsekhovoi*], trade-unionist, but not communist. The question of the present share of the proletariat in the general national economy – an extremely important question of course – must not be placed above the question of maintaining the dictatorship of the proletariat as the condition for building socialism. Surely we all agree on this, and not just since yesterday.

But something else is also quite obvious to all of us, namely that we can be faced with the same historical danger of a split from the opposite extreme as well. If conditions develop in such a way that the proletariat is forced to make too many sacrifices to maintain the alliance, if the working class came to the conclusion over a number of years that it had been forced to deny its own class too much in the name of preserving its political dictatorship – this would undercut the Soviet state from the other extreme.

We are not of course talking about the two extremes of the historical danger of a split between the proletariat and the peasantry because we consider this to be a real and present danger. No, none of us thinks this. We are looking at the

40 Lenin 1965d, p. 486.

danger from a historical perspective, so that we can better find our bearings in today's politics. It is absolutely indisputable that this must be a manoeuvrable politics, demanding the greatest attention when sounding the depths, with their potential sandbanks, and keeping a cautious eye on both banks – the right and the left. It is equally indisputable that under current conditions the balance of interests has been upset primarily at the expense of the countryside, and that serious consideration must be given to this both in economic and political terms.

The general considerations outlined above relate primarily to the development of industry and to the pace of that development.

If the Soviet state persists on the basis of the alliance of workers and peasants, then the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat persists on the basis of state industry and transport. Without a socialist dictatorship, the Soviet state would be a body without a 'soul'. It would be doomed to inevitable bourgeois degeneration. Industry though, the basis of the socialist dictatorship, depends on the peasant economy. But this is a reciprocal relationship. The peasant economy depends in turn on industry. Of these two component parts, the more dynamic (driving, forward-pushing) element is industry. The most powerful influence that Soviet power can exert on the village is through the conduits of industry and transport. Other modes of influence, very important in themselves, still take second and third place. Without a proper increase in the role of state industry, without strengthening its organisational influence over the village, all other measures are doomed in the final analysis to impotence.

The pace of development of industry – and both town and village have an interest in speeding it up – does not of course depend on our good will. There are objective limits here: the level of the peasant economy, the equipment of industry itself, the available working capital, the level of culture of the country, and so on. Any attempt to artificially skip over these limitations would of course exact its own bitter revenge, striking at one end the proletariat, and at the other the peasantry. But it would be no less dangerous for industry to lag behind the economic upsurge of the country, as this would inevitably cause a goods famine and high retail prices, which would inevitably lead in turn to the enrichment of private capital. Nor is the pace of socialist accumulation and industrial development without limits in another direction as well, i.e. it is limited not only by a certain maximum but also by a certain minimum. This minimum is directly determined by the internal competition of private capital and the external pressure of world capital.

The danger that emerges from our entire course of development is two-fold in nature. Industry cannot charge too far ahead, for it lacks the necessary national economic foundation. But to lag behind is just as dangerous. Every

delay, every slip means the growth of the private capital that is competing with it, the growth of the kulak in the village, and the growth of the economic and political influence of the kulak on the village. Any lag in industry means a shift in the balance of forces from the city to the village, and, within the village, from the poor peasants to the kulaks of the new Soviet type. By weakening the proletariat, this shift in the centre of gravity would then force it to make further economic and political concessions in the name of maintaining the worker-peasant alliance. But it is quite clear that if it takes this road, the proletariat would lose its socialist content.

Therefore all the difficulties and dangers stemming from the transitional period of our economic development, in which the proletariat leads the building of socialism on the foundation of many millions of petty commodity producers, all our difficulties, taken together and individually, will always be, as we have already said, two-sided rather than one-sided in nature. Pushing for a pace of industrial development that is too fast is just as dangerous as a pace of development that is too slow.

I hope that these observations are completely beyond dispute. They can be criticised for being too general. Yet to accuse me of underestimating the peasantry is incomparably more general and vague, and, what is more, extremely one-sided. The peasantry must be 'evaluated' not in terms of itself, but in terms of the shifting balance between the classes. No pre-existing mathematical formula could tell us how far we must go to reconcile the interests of the proletariat and the peasantry, and where we should stop. Finding one's bearings and sizing up the situation requires constant, active manoeuvring. This manoeuvring, however, in our party has never been and can never be an unprincipled tacking from side to side (as Menshevism and anarchism portray it). Our manoeuvring, both economic and political, boils down to a series of measures, which, on the basis of the alliance between the workers and the peasants, guarantees the dictatorship of the proletariat, and, consequently, the possibility of continued socialist construction. That is our prime criterion.

This persistent accusation, so wrong in its one-sidedness, that I 'underestimate the peasantry', is all the more harmful because it inevitably stokes fear – unfounded fear of course – that it is merely the theoretical groundwork for a change in course – from a socialist dictatorship to a democracy of peasants and workers. This is nonsense of course! Our party, while retaining complete freedom to manoeuvre, is united from top to bottom by a programme for the socialist reorganisation of social relations. That is Lenin's main legacy to us, one which we have all unanimously pledged to carry out to the end. And we will do that!

‘Bolshevism or Trotskyism (Where the Trotskyist Line is Leading)’¹

G. Zinoviev

1 The Disagreements over October and my Mistake at the Time. Some Facts about Brest and about the First Congress of the Party after October

To substitute Leninism with Trotskyism – that is the task comrade Trotsky has set himself. With that in mind, he set about ‘instigating’ this already at the end of 1922 in his preface to *1905* (for more detail see comrade Kamenev’s report). While comrade Lenin still held the reins in his hands, comrade Trotsky decided not to launch a direct attack. Now apparently comrade Trotsky has decided that ‘the moment has arrived’. According to all the rules of strategy, before launching the ‘decisive’ blow it is necessary to prepare the ground with artillery fire. The attack on the so-called ‘right wing’ of Bolshevism, in particular on the October mistakes of the writer of these lines, is intended as a smoke-screen.

I did in fact commit a major error at the start of November 1917. This mistake, it is true, was recognised and rectified by me after a few days. But as these were not ordinary days but critical ones, the error was extremely dangerous.

In any event, I will not minimise the extent of this error.

It was precisely because of the unusual acuteness of the moment that Vladimir Il’ich repudiated our error so sharply at that time. All of the most draconian punitive measures which he proposed against us then, all of the most passionate rebukes he dealt against us, were of course thoroughly justified. Very soon after these events (in a few weeks, and at the start of the disputes over the Brest Peace), V.I. himself, as the entire CC and all of the leadership of the party were aware, regarded these disagreements as completely settled.

In his speech ‘Trotskyism or Leninism?’, comrade Stalin notes quite correctly that for several reasons in the September–October period the revolution endeavoured to be too defensive in its advance. This was understandable after

1 G. Zinov’ev, ‘Bol’shevizm ili Trotskizm?’ *Pravda*, no. 273, 30 November 1924, pp. 3–6; and simultaneously in *Izvestiia*, no. 274, 30 November 1924, pp. 5–8.

all of the twists and turns with the Kornilov affair [*Kornilovshchina*]. I was in the underground at that time, and I fell victim to my own mistake precisely because of the peculiarity of that phase.

As to the nature and extent of my mistake at that time – we can focus on this in more detail elsewhere. (In the coming weeks, I hope to publish my articles from that period with a detailed introduction and supplemented with all the documents available to us at that time). It is sufficient to say the following here.

Coming back to our error three years after it had been committed, Lenin wrote the following:

On the eve of the October Revolution in Russia, and immediately after it, a number of very good Communists in Russia committed an error, one which our people are now loth to recall. Why are they loth to recall it? Because, unless there is particular reason for it, it is wrong to recall mistakes which have been completely set right. [...] [They] wavered and expressed the fear that the Bolsheviks were isolating themselves excessively, were taking too much risk in heading for an uprising, and were too unyielding in their attitude towards a certain section of the ‘Mensheviks’ and ‘Socialist-Revolutionaries’. The conflict became so acute that these comrades demonstratively resigned from all responsible posts in Party and government, to the great glee of the enemies of the Soviet revolution. It developed so far that the Central Committee of our Party conducted a very heated controversy in the press with the comrades who had resigned. But a few weeks later – at most a few months – all these comrades realised their mistake and returned to their posts, some of the most responsible in the Party and the Soviets.

LENIN, *Sobr. soch.*, v. XVII, p. 373²

Comrade Lenin makes no mention whatsoever of a ‘right wing’ ...

I myself (without waiting for a reminder from comrade Trotsky who is less qualified than anyone to speak about our mistake) tried repeatedly to air my mistake before our party and before the entire Comintern. I spoke of it for example in the following way at the opening of the Fourth World Congress of the Comintern which fell on the fifth anniversary of October:

² Lenin 1966c, p. 385. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: ‘But it will be useful to recall this mistake for the benefit of the Italian workers. At the time mentioned, prominent Bolsheviks and Communists, such as Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Nogin and Milyutin’.

Permit me now to express a short personal disclaimer. It seems to me that I am especially obliged to say this now on the fifth anniversary of the revolution. You know, comrades, that five years ago, I, together with several other comrades, made a great mistake, which I believe was the greatest mistake of my life. I failed at that time to appreciate fully the whole counter-revolutionary nature of the Mensheviks. That was the essence of our mistake before October 1917. Although we had struggled against the Mensheviks for over ten years, I, like many comrades at that time, was not able at the decisive moment to rid myself of the idea that the Mensheviks and SRs, although they were a rightist faction, a right wing, nevertheless were part of the working class. In fact they were and are the 'left' wing of the international bourgeoisie, highly skilful, flexible and therefore especially dangerous. And so it seems to me, comrades, that it is our duty to remind all our comrades ... etc.³

I spoke of our mistake in the most widely circulated of my books – in the *History of the RKP*⁴ – and on many earlier occasions.

It is simply ludicrous to consider the author of these lines to be part of a 'right wing' of Bolshevism. The whole of the Bolshevik Party is well-aware that, working hand in hand with comrade Lenin for almost twenty years, I never once had any kind of sharp disagreement with him, aside from one instance mentioned. The 1914–17 period, from the start of the imperialist war to the start of the proletarian revolution in our country, was a not unimportant period. It was precisely during these years that a crucial regrouping took place in the camp of the international labour movement. The books *Socialism and War* (1915) and *Against the Stream*⁵ (this book appeared a few weeks after the October Revolution and was provided with two prefaces from the authors, one of which was written at the start of March 1918) are ample evidence that I in no way was a representative of a right wing of Bolshevism at that time. At the April 1917 Conference⁶ (the significance of which comrade Trotsky misrepresents), I did not have the slightest disagreement with comrade Lenin. In the dispute between comrade Lenin on the one hand, and comrades Kamenev, Nogin and

3 G. Zinov'ev, *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional za rabotoi. Takticheskie problem Kominterni i rabota ego seksii* 2-e izd. Gos. Izd-vo, Moskva-Petrograd. 1923. pp. 14–15 [original footnote]. [Zinov'ev 1923b, pp. 14–15].

4 Zinov'ev 1973; for the original, see Zinov'ev 1923.

5 Zinov'ev and Lenin 1915, in translation as Zinov'ev 1972; Zinov'ev 1918b.

6 We hope that the protocols will be published soon [original footnote].

Rykov on the other, I was completely on comrade Lenin's side, as can be seen from a number of my reports and speeches at the April 1917 Conference. This dispute remained of course within the confines of Bolshevism – that is how comrade Lenin and the whole party saw it, and only when comrade Trotsky writes about it does this dispute take on the appearance of a 'right wing' struggle against the party. Not the slightest disagreements appeared between me and comrade Lenin during and after the July days. We had occasion to test this at our leisure in the course of the several weeks when I and v.i. were hiding together in the underground. I noticed the first disagreement around the beginning of October 1917, after the liquidation of the Kornilov affair, and after comrade Lenin's article 'On Compromises'⁷ (in this article, v.i. proposed an agreement under certain conditions with the Mensheviks and SRs). My error was that I tried to continue the line of the article 'On Compromises' some days later. It was only for a few days – but at that time those days were like months.

At the famous meeting of the CC on 10 October 1917, where the insurrection was decided upon, and where for the first time the differences of opinion about the timing of the insurrection and the evaluation of the prospects in the Constituent Assembly arose between me and Kamenev on the one hand, and the other members of the CC on the other, the first Politburo of the CC was created to lead the insurrection. As the recently discovered protocols show, seven members were elected to this Politburo: Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Trotsky, Stalin, Sokol'nikov, Bubnov. At the no less important meeting of the Central Committee with a number of Petersburg party workers on 16 October, after the discussions between comrade Lenin and us, comrade Lenin's proposal in its final form received 19 votes for, 2 against, with 4 abstentions; my resolution, as can also be seen in the recently discovered notes, received 6 for, 15 against, with 3 abstentions, whereby my proposal was introduced by comrade Volodarsky as an amendment to comrade Lenin's resolution. My amendment read that 'we will not arrange the insurrection in the next five days, we must not begin the insurrection until our comrades have convened and until we have consulted with each other'. My written proposal, which was voted on at this meeting, read: 'Without postponing the investigatory and preparatory steps, it be considered that no action be permitted before consultation with the Bolshevik section of the Congress of Soviets'.⁸

⁷ Lenin 1964x, pp. 305–10.

⁸ *Protokoly* 1958, p. 104.

It was at this time that comrade Lenin came out with his well-known articles against us. I continued to work diligently for *Pravda*. When the action was finally decided upon, I – so as to quash the exaggerated rumours about disagreements which were leaking out in the press – wrote a short letter to the editors (on the subject ‘Let’s close ranks’), which was published with an editorial comment that the dispute was over, and that in essence we have been and still are of one mind (see *Pravda*, 21 November 1917).⁹

In the issue of our central organ *Rabochii put’* (replacing *Pravda*) at that time, which came out on the day of the insurrection, 25 October, the unsigned lead was written by me.¹⁰ The second article was likewise written (and signed) by me (in the underground in those days, I often wrote two or more articles a day). In this latter article, we read:

A great task confronts the Second Congress of Soviets. The hour-hands of history are racing. 12 o’clock is striking. The slightest new delay threatens immediate defeat ... The last hopes for a peaceful resolution of the crisis are past. The last hopes for peace, to which, I confess, the author of these lines was no stranger until the final days, have been crushed by life ... All Power to the Soviets! It all comes down to this at the present historical moment.¹¹

The issue of our central organ of 26 October (see *Rabochii put’*, no. 46) contains a short piece about my first appearance, after my time in the underground, at the meeting of the Petrograd Soviet on 25 October, the day of the insurrection. This is what we read there:

The floor is given to Zinoviev, whom the Soviet greets with a thunderous ovation.

Zinoviev’s Speech

– Comrades, we are now in the period of insurrection. I believe however that there can be no doubts about the outcome, – we will be victorious.

I am convinced that a huge part of the peasantry will come over to our side as soon as they learn about our proposals on the land question.

9 Zinoviev is possibly referring to ‘Pis’mo k tovarishcham’, *Pravda*, no. 183, 21 November (8 November O.S.) 1917, p. 2.

10 ‘Pered resheniem’, *Rabochii put’*, no. 45, 7 November (25 October O.S.) 1917, pp. 1–2.

11 G. Zinov’ev, ‘K S’ezdu Sovetov’, *Rabochii put’*, no. 45, 7 November (25 October O.S.) 1917, p. 3.

Long live the social revolution which is beginning now. Long live the Petrograd working class which will achieve ultimate victory!

Today we paid our debt to the international proletariat and dealt a severe blow to the war, a body-blow [*udar v grud'*] to all imperialists and especially to the executioner Wilhelm.

Down with the war, long live international peace!¹²

Sharp differences arose again in our ranks in the first days of November (according to the old calendar) at the moment when the Right SRs and Mensheviks were already finished and when it was a question of whether we would be able to bring the Left SRs and the best of the Mensheviks over to the side of Soviet power. In those days, I and other comrades had to participate in the memorable negotiations with Vikzhel' (the organisation of railway workers, whose leaders were defencists and whose power was overestimated at the time because of the belief that Vikzhel' would hold in its hands the fate of the railways, and therefore to a significant degree the fate of the Civil War). These negotiations were carried out with the full agreement of the Central Committee of our party (and therefore of comrade Lenin as well) and the then CEC of the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies. These disagreements played out literally in the course of two to three days but they were extremely heated during those two to three days.

On 2 November 1917, the CC of our party with the participation of comrade Lenin adopted a resolution which stated, among other things:

The CC affirms that, not having excluded anybody from the Second Congress of Soviets, it is even now fully prepared to permit the return of those who walked out (as is well-known, the Right SRs and Mensheviks walked out of the Second Congress of Soviets) and to agree to a coalition within the Soviets with those who walked out, and that, *consequently, all talk about the Bolsheviks refusing to share power with anybody is absolutely false* (our emphasis).

The CC affirms that on the day the present government was formed, a few hours before its formation, the CC invited three representatives of the Left

12 'Ekstrennoe zasedanie Petrogradskogo Soveta. Rech' Zinov'eva', *Rabochii put'*, no. 46, 8 November (26 October O.S.) 1917, p. 5.

SRS to attend its meeting and formally proposed that they should join the government. The refusal of the Left SRS, although it was provisional and conditional, places on these Left SRS the entire responsibility for the fact that an agreement with them was not reached (*Pravda*, no. 180 of 4/17 November 1917).¹³

The reader should take special note of these paragraphs of the resolution, undoubtedly written by comrade Lenin, so as to understand better everything that happened subsequently.

In *Pravda*, no. 180 of 4 November (from 30 October the central organ of our party again began to be called *Pravda*), we read the following extract from my speech, delivered at the meeting of the Central Executive Committee of the SRS and SDS on 2 November 1917:

In the name of the CC of the RSDRP (remember that our party was not yet called Communist at that time), I declare that comrade SRS (these were the Left SRS, whom the CC of our party, headed by comrade Lenin, was trying to persuade to join the first Soviet government) should not start criticising us Bolsheviks at a time when events are taking place on the streets of Moscow which the Moscow delegates are talking about today (at the time, the struggle for Soviet power was still underway in Moscow). We therefore remind our SR comrades that before revealing the composition of our government we suggested to them that they join the government, but they stated that they would participate in the work of the government but would not yet join the government.¹⁴

At the meeting of the Petrograd Soviet on 3 November 1917 (see the same issue of *Pravda*), the author of these lines stated:

Comrades, among us are comrades from the Red Army, soldiers and sailors who in a few hours will rush to Moscow to help our comrades and brothers. (Thunderous, prolonged applause). Two days ago, the Military Revolutionary Committee wanted to send aid to our Moscow comrades but encountered obstacles from quarters from which support might have been expected. I am speaking here about some leading circles in the upper reaches of the railway employees who took a 'neutral' position at

13 Lenin 1964qq, p. 278. The phrases in brackets were added by Zinoviev.

14 'Zasedanie Tsentr. Ispoln. Kom. S. R. i S. D.', *Pravda*, no. 180, 17 November (4 November O.S.) 1917, p. 1.

this fateful hour for the revolution. But at that terrible hour, one must not blow hot or cold – I do not wish to use sharp words but you yourselves understand, comrades, how the future will judge this fact.

Recently, there was a delay in sending troops to Moscow. When the leaders of Vikzhel' were asked how they could do this, they replied: but we have also delayed transports from the General Staff. The person whose chest beats with a democratic heart cannot deprive the workers and soldiers of the chance to render aid to their comrades by using the pretext that he also obstructed – if he really obstructed – the counter-revolutionaries.

We must appeal to the rank-and-file of the railwaymen and explain to them what 'neutrality' means under these conditions. I have no doubt that 99 percent of the rank-and-file railway employees and workers will side with the fighting soldiers and workers. A whole range of central committees are sitting on the fence at present. Unfortunately, one of these is Vikzhel'. No one could have foreseen that the leading organ of the railwaymen would remain 'neutral' while workers and soldiers were fighting on the barricades. We must put an end to this. The railway proletariat, as a man, must stand with the fighting workers and soldiers, must help them overcome the resistance of the bourgeoisie and the landowners. There can be no more delay. Everything must be thrown onto the scale, so that the final victory draws nearer ...

Greetings to the comrades who are coming to the aid of revolutionary Moscow. (Thunderous, prolonged applause). Now we are giving back to Moscow what it gave the revolution in 1905. At that time Moscow rose up first, it delivered the first great blow against the autocracy. We are happy that we are now able to help, that we now have the chance to redeploy our victorious troops to the Moscow front.

Long live the comrades who are going to Moscow, – All Russia is watching them!

The entire Soviet gave a noisy ovation to the comrades who were going to Moscow.¹⁵

15 'Podderzhka revoliutsionnoi Moskv', *Pravda*, no. 180, 17 November (4 November O.S.) 1917, p. 2.

On the evening of 3 November and the morning of 4 November, our negotiations with the Left SRS and with the meeting called by Vikzhel' were at a most critical stage. At that moment we made the greatest mistake. The well-known declaration by a group of comrades, myself included, in the Bolshevik CC and in the Sovnarkom (regarding our resignation from our responsible posts over the intransigence of our CC) was signed on 4 November 1917, and on 7 November 1917 my 'Letter to the Comrades' was published in *Pravda* (see *Pravda*, no. 183). In this letter we stated (I quote the most important part):

The CEC of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets put forward a concrete plan of agreement (the resolution of 3 November) with which I fully agree, for it demands the immediate recognition of the decrees on land, peace, and workers' control [*rabochii kontrol'*], and the recognition of Soviet power.

In reply to the resolution of the Central Executive Committee, the Mensheviks submitted a number of preliminary conditions. The CEC, not wanting to make the negotiations more difficult, adopted (in spite of its intransigence) a resolution proposed by us which removed the obstacles to these negotiations.

Nevertheless, the other side did not want to make any concessions to the CEC. The conditions they proposed were rejected by the Mensheviks and the SRS. The attempt to reach an agreement was carried to its conclusion in spite of all the obstacles, but its lack of success was not our fault. It is obvious now that the Mensheviks and SRS did not want any agreement and were merely looking for a pretext to wreck it. Now all the workers and soldiers will know who bears responsibility for wrecking the agreement. Now – I am convinced – the Left SRS too will blame the Mensheviks for wrecking the agreement and will join our government.

Under the present state of affairs, whereby the Mensheviks have rejected negotiations under the conditions proposed by the CEC, I accede to the suggestion of my comrades and withdraw my declaration of resignation from the CC.

I appeal to my closest comrades. Comrades! We made a great sacrifice when we openly protested against the majority of our CC and demanded the agreement. This agreement however was rejected by the other side. This is a difficult time, an extremely critical time. It is our right, our duty

to warn the party of errors. But we stand with the party, we prefer to make our mistakes together with the millions of workers and soldiers and to die with them, rather than stand aside at this critical, historic moment.

There will be, there must be no split in our party.¹⁶

From 8 November, I participated as before in the work of our Central Committee. On 9 November, I delivered a speech in its name at the All-Russian Peasant Congress, and on 10 November at a meeting of the Petrograd Soviet I gave a speech saying that we would recognise the Constituent Assembly 'only if this Constituent Assembly expresses the actual will of the workers, soldiers and peasants'.¹⁷

Of course, now, after seven years, it seems monstrous to every rank-and-file member of our party that there could have been any doubt about the real force of the *Vikzhel'* and of those alleged internationalists from the SR and Menshevik camp who grouped around it. Of course, however, it is necessary to place yourself in the situation of the time in order to understand that situation. Barely six months after the October insurrection, it became clear that the Left SRs had also become a counter-revolutionary force. In October 1917, though, comrade Lenin and our CC had insistently invited them into our first Soviet government as they were connected at that time with large strata of the peasantry and with a part of the workers. And indeed even the negotiations with the *Vikzhel'* were conducted, as the reader has seen, with the approval of the CC.

The exposure of the Mensheviks and SRs at the *Vikzhel'* conference caused the Left SRs, whom comrade Lenin had earlier invited in vain to join the Soviet government, now joined it; and yet a few days before this the Left SRs were even intending to resign from the CEC – which in the situation at that time would have been a blow to the Bolsheviks and would have been an obstacle to winning the peasantry over to our side.

In *Pravda* on 4 November 1917, we read:

'The faction of the Left SRs submitted an ultimatum to the CEC about the need to draw up a platform acceptable to both sides. A majority of the CEC agreed to this demand, and the platform was drawn up in the name of the CEC'.¹⁸

16 'Pis'mo k tovarishcham', *Pravda*, no. 183, 21 November (8 November O.S.) 1917, p. 2.

17 'Zasedanie Petrogradskogo Soveta', *Pravda*, no. 186, 24 November (11 November O.S.) 1917, p. 2.

18 'Zasedanie Tsentr. Ispoln. Kom. S. R. i S. D.', *Pravda*, no. 180, 17 November (4 November O.S.) 1917, p. 1.

The rejection of this platform by the Mensheviks and SRS at the Vikzhel' conference led to the change in tactics by the Left SRS in favour of Soviet power.

In these days the pages of *Pravda* featured a series of resolutions from the most important plants (see, for example, 4 November, 'Putilovites on the Current Situation') which stated: 'While we regard the agreement of the socialist parties as desirable, we workers ... declare that agreement can be reached only on the basis of the following conditions'¹⁹ (and those conditions were approximately the same as those put forward by our representatives at the Vikzhel' conference). In those days we reflected the vacillations of these workers – in this sense, our error was neither personal nor accidental.

Now, seven years after the events, surely the words of the resolution of our CC that 'the assertion that the Bolsheviks would not want to share power with anyone is an outright lie', sound monstrous in light of the present state of affairs? And yet comrade Lenin wrote these words on 2 November 1917, and our CC approved them. Anyone who thinks about these facts, anyone who remembers that the Left SRS at that time represented a significant part of the peasantry, anyone who reflects on the general situation, will grasp the extent and nature of our mistake at that time. It was of course a big mistake, but it was not a 'Social-Democratic' one.

We say all this not of course to prove that our mistake was minor. We remained outside of the CC of the party for only three days – from 4 to 7 November. Nevertheless, this mistake was, as we said at the opening of the Fourth Congress of the Comintern, the greatest mistake we had made in our lives. The only thing we want to prove here is that it is wrong to conclude from this mistake that Bolshevism had a 'right wing'.

Everyone who experienced those memorable days knows that, no matter how painful those sharp disagreements among close comrades and friends, they left no great bitterness. Everybody at that time was completely sincere in their attitude to the mistakes of the others, without attempting to 'exploit' the mistake for 'diplomatic', for factional, purposes. Everybody understood that only the exceptional nature of the moment led to the exceptional measures to resolve the sharp disagreement, which swirled up like a whirlwind, but which, like a whirlwind, quickly subsided without causing any great damage.

Those disagreements were swept away in the avalanche of fresh events, of fresh difficulties for the revolution; they lingered only within the leadership of the party. Literally a few days passed and the error was admitted by those who had committed it, and the general staff of the party and the entire party

19 'Putilovtsy o momente', *Pravda*, no. 180, 17 November (4 November O.S.) 1917, p. 3.

turned to pressing matters. This disagreement left so few traces in the party that at the first congress after the October insurrection, which took place a few weeks after the aforementioned disagreement (we are referring to the Seventh Congress which had already settled the question of the Brest Peace) – at the Seventh Congress not a single person uttered one word about this disagreement. Nobody reproached us for this mistake – even though it so happened that I, at the behest of the CC, had to fight vehemently at this congress against comrade Trotsky and against the 'Leftists'.²⁰ It is clear, after all, that had there been new signs of disagreement, the party would have attacked the guilty parties if they had evaluated this guilt as comrade Trotsky does now. At the Seventh Congress, which took place, we repeat, a few weeks after October, the debates took a quite different course. Comrade Trotsky had already declared his resignation from all responsible posts (see *Prot.*, pp. 147–8).²¹ Trotsky and the 'Left' Com-

20 It is interesting to note the results of the elections of the new CC at the Seventh Congress. The author of these lines received only *one* vote less than comrade Lenin.

It is very interesting to review the mood of the party precisely at the *first* congress to take place a few weeks after October when the impressions left by the former disagreements were still quite fresh. In this regard, the protocols of the Seventh Congress (published by Gosizdat in 1923) represent a most valuable document.

Now, in *The Lessons of October*, comrade Trotsky, seven years after the events, states that our position on the Brest Peace was 'capitulationism'. This was said in retrospect in September 1924. And this is what *Trotsky himself* said at the Seventh Congress *a few weeks* after the October disagreements:

'Before the final trip to Brest-Litovsk, we spent the whole time discussing the future tactics. And only one voice in the CC (let's say not one, for comrade Lenin, and comrade Stalin, and comrade Sverdlov said the same; comrade Kamenev had been arrested in Finland – G.Z.) was in favour of immediately signing the peace: that was Zinoviev's voice. He spoke wholly in support of his viewpoint, and I was in complete agreement with him. He said that any delay would worsen the peace terms, it must be signed now' (*Prot. VII s'ezda*, p. 79). [*Sed"moi Ekstrennyi S'ezd* 1962, p. 66].

If the proposal to sign the Brest Peace was 'capitulationism', then comrade Lenin was a 'capitulationist' (in actual fact, it was Trotsky's tactics at that time that would lead to the failure of the revolution, i.e. to *true capitulation*). If Trotsky himself offered such comments as those above at the start of 1918, who will believe his ultra-polemical comments now in 1924? Is it not clear that this is all the product of retrospection? [original footnote].

21 'The Party Congress, the highest institution of the party, has indirectly repudiated the policy pursued by myself and other members of our Brest-Litovsk delegation, a policy which had a well-known international reaction from both sides both in the working class and among the ruling classes, and which made the participants of this delegation into the most hated names for the bourgeoisie of German and Austro-Hungary; and now the entire German and Austro-Hungarian press is full of accusations against the Brest-Litovsk

munists were the target of the 'resolution of Lenin and Zinoviev' (see *Protokol*, p. 3), and, on the departures from the CC in general, comrade Lenin said the following:

I, too, was in the Central Committee in such a position at the time when a proposal not to sign the peace treaty was adopted, and I kept silent, without in any way closing my eyes to the fact that I was not accepting responsibility for it. Every member of the Central Committee is able to disclaim responsibility without ceasing to be a member and without raising an uproar. Of course, comrades, in certain circumstances it is permissible, sometimes it is inevitable, but that this should be necessary now with the present organisation of Soviet power, which enables us to check how far we are keeping contact with the masses – this I doubt.²²

At the Seventh Congress, comrade Trotsky, who had been in our party at that time for only about six months, provoked the first Trotsky crisis. Since then, alas, these crises have been repeated periodically.

2 The Revision of Leninism under the Banner of ... Lenin

Comrade Trotsky's last attack (*The Lessons of October*) is nothing more than a blatant attempt at revision – or even direct liquidation – of the foundations of Leninism. Only a short time is needed to make this clear to our party and the entire International. The 'novelty' of this attempt is the effort, for 'strategic' considerations, to carry out this revision in the name of Lenin. We saw something similar at the start of the campaign of Bernstein and the Bernsteinians [*Bernshteiniantzy*], when they set about 'revising' the foundations of Marxism. The ideas of Marx were so widely recognised in the international labour movement that even their revision had to be undertaken at least initially in the name of Marx. A quarter of a century was necessary before the revisionists would be

delegation, and in particular against me personally, blaming us for the collapse of the peace and for all further unfortunate consequences. Whether the Party Congress wanted this or not, it confirmed this assertion by its final vote, and I therefore resign every responsible post, with which the party has hitherto entrusted me' (Speech by comrade Trotsky at Seventh Congress, March 1918). [*Sed'moi Ekstrennyi S'ezd* 1962, p. 129]. In this manner, quite unusual among the Bolsheviks, comrade Trotsky resigned six months after he had joined our party [original footnote].

22 Lenin 1965e, p. 149.

able to discard their mask once and for all and openly acknowledge that, in terms of theory, they had completely disavowed Marx. This was not done completely openly in the literature until 1924 – in the recently published collection of articles devoted to Kautsky's 70th birthday.²³

The ideas of Leninism are so dominant today in the international revolutionary movement – and especially in our country – that the 'critics' of Leninism feel that they have to invoke this fact as well: they carry out their revisions of Leninism 'in the name of Lenin', citing Lenin, swearing their fidelity to the principles of Leninism (in these situations the deceased Lenin would surely have said: 'Don't they get tired of swearing on my name?'). This 'strategy' does not help however. The Leninist party has already seen through it. After a few weeks, all the sparrows on the rooftops will be twittering about the collapse of this remarkable strategy. Comrade Trotsky has overlooked one small thing: that our party is so Leninist and so mature that it is capable of distinguishing Leninism from Trotskyism. Comrade Trotsky's attack is an attack lacking resources. Nobody will manage to destroy the foundations of Leninism, or carry out even a partial revision of the principles of Leninism, or even manage to get Trotskyism recognised as a 'legitimate tendency' within Leninism. Nobody will manage to convince the party that we now need some kind of 'synthesis' of Leninism and Trotskyism. Trotskyism is as suitable an ingredient of Leninism as a spoonful of tar is a suitable 'ingredient' of a vat of honey.

What is Leninism? Leninism is the Marxism from the era of imperialist wars in the era of world revolution which began directly in a country where the peasantry was in the majority. Lenin was a proletarian revolutionary from head to toe. But he knew at the same time that he had to work in a country where the peasantry was in the majority, and where therefore the proletariat could be victorious only if the working class had a correct attitude to the peasantry. After Lenin, prior to the 1905 revolution, put forward the great slogan: 'the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry',²⁴ he did not cease being a proletarian revolutionary for a second, and not only did he make no concessions to bourgeois democracy (it is well-known that the Mensheviks, including comrade Trotsky, were at this time accusing comrade Lenin, who called himself a Marxist, of actually being a supposed ideologist of bourgeois democracy), he was the only one who, not just with words, prepared the way at that time for the socialist revolution in a situation where bourgeois democracy was still a force capable of shattering the tsarist autocracy. At that

23 This presumably refers to Jessen and Adler 1924.

24 Lenin 1962c, pp. 293–303.

time, Lenin already believed he was the recognised leader of the proletarian revolution, and indeed he was. He knew and believed that the Bolshevik Party, i.e. the true vanguard of the proletariat, would help the working class as far as possible along the path of achieving its own class aims, i.e. along the path to the victory of the proletarian revolution. He knew that, in every situation, he and his party would do everything possible to learn as much as possible from that situation in order to advance the ultimate goal of the proletarian movement. He understood the relationship between the bourgeois-democratic and the proletarian-socialist revolutions so well that: 'The first develops into the second. The second, in passing, solves the problems of the first. The second consolidates the work of the first. Struggle, and struggle alone, decides how far the second succeeds in outgrowing the first'.²⁵

And knowing this, Lenin manoeuvred brilliantly in three revolutions – always at the head of the working class, always sharpening his tactics so that every historical situation was used to the fullest extent in the interests of his own class.

Lenin on 10 January (1905) was 'not the same man' he had been on 8 January, for on 9 January a famous demonstration by Petersburg workers took place, for on 9 January the revolutionary movement of the workers rose to the next level. 'Our ranks swelled', my class grew stronger, and apparently the scope of the party had to grow in tune with it as well. On 24 October 1917 Lenin was 'not the same man' he would become on 26 October 1917. 'Do not boast when riding to battle; boast when you return from it', wrote Lenin several days before the October insurrection (in an article entitled 'Revision of the Party Programme'). 'We do not know whether our victory will come tomorrow or a little later. (I personally am inclined to think that it will be tomorrow – I am writing this on October 6, 1917 – and that there may be a delay in our seizure of power; still, tomorrow is tomorrow and not today) ... No, dear comrades, we have not yet won'.²⁶ Therefore comrade Lenin defended at that time, among other things, the need to keep the minimum programme.

But the day after the victory of the October insurrection, the ingenious commander of the working class was 'not the same man' (or not quite) as he had been on the day before this victory. My class had become stronger, the enemies

25 Lenin. *Sobr. Soch.*, v. XVIII, part 1, p. 336 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1966d, p. 54].

26 v. XIV, part 2, pp. 166–7 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1964q, pp. 170, 171. Zinoviev appears to be paraphrasing the original quotation. The exact quotation from Lenin reads: 'We must not boast when riding to battle, we must not discard the minimum programme, for this would be an empty boast' (ibid). The latter quotation by Zinoviev from Lenin is reproduced out of sequence].

of my class had become weaker, the resources of the workers' revolution had increased – hence, more pressure, move boldly forward! That is the real Lenin. How the great river pushes out its waves and, in the strict sense of the word, the river is not precisely the same thing from one minute to the next, but at the same time it remains a great river, just as Lenin remains a great leader of the proletarian revolution, great before everything, and even before he can see the concrete path of the proletarian revolution. He knows that it is not a smooth, garden path, covered in gravel, and easy to travel. He knows that it is a very difficult and quite rough road, and it must be travelled not only by a small group of intellectuals who know how to form a 'non-factional' faction with Martov, but by millions of workers; and behind them, if we want to be victorious, the tens of millions of peasants of our country must follow without fail.

Lenin's formulas and slogans live, they are permeated through and through with the 'scent' of life, of the struggle of the masses. Their scale grows as the movement of millions grows.

This is not an abstract course taken in a vacuum, as with Trotsky, whose abstract, supposedly 'leftist' 'permanent' course is actually combined with a highly un-abstract alliance with the Mensheviks.

From the great slogan of 'the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and of the peasantry' (1905–17) via 'the dictatorship of the proletariat and the poorest peasantry' (1917) to the actual *dictatorship of the proletariat* which is being realised on the basis of the '*alliance [smychka]* with the peasantry' – that is the path of Leninism.

From the Menshevism of the Axelrod kind (1903–5) via the 'permanent' (1905–7) variant of Menshevism to the utter repudiation of the revolution and its substitution with the Menshevik 'freedom of coalition' (1909–14) to the ambivalent policy (the bloc with Chkheidze and the struggle against the Zimmerwald Left) during the war (1914–17) – that is the path of old Trotskyism.

The written history of Bolshevism might be said to be encompassed (or at least characterised) by the following works of comrade Lenin: from 'The Friends of the People' and 'The Development of Capitalism' – via 'What Is To Be Done?' and 'Two Tactics' – to 'State and Revolution' and 'The Renegade Kautsky'.²⁷ These are the important literary milestones of Leninism. Let us consider what these milestones mark. 'The Friends of the People' and 'The Development of Capitalism' constitute a brilliant, incisive analysis of the theory of Marxism, and the most concrete, profound study of the economics and the

27 Lenin 1960a, pp. 129–332; Lenin 1960b, pp. 21–608; Lenin 1961a, pp. 347–529; Lenin 1962d, pp. 15–140; Lenin 1964r, pp. 381–492; Lenin 1965f, pp. 227–325.

social structure of the country in which Bolshevism plans to start its action. 'What Is To Be Done?' and 'Two Tactics' constitute an unparalleled critique of Social-Democratic opportunism, an unsurpassed justification of the role of the workers' party in the revolution, and a justification of the proletariat's tactics in a peasant country on the eve of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, which one must endeavour to carry out in such a way that it begins to 'develop' as quickly as possible into the second revolution – the socialist revolution. 'State and Revolution' and 'The Renegade Kautsky' are the application of Leninism on the world stage; they constitute (together with the book 'Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism')²⁸ the most profound analysis of the newest form of imperialism and the justification of the tactics of the socialist revolution which is already underway and which is 'growing out' of the first, i.e. the bourgeois-democratic revolution.

Let us compare all this with Trotskyism!

If Lenin is the classic type of proletarian revolutionary, Trotsky is the 'classic' type of intellectual revolutionary (of course, we are comparing not the individuals here but the representatives of two political trends). This intellectual revolutionary has admittedly some strong features, he is sometimes able to come together with the proletarian masses (during a great upsurge of activity), but the heart of his political activity is that of the intellectual revolutionary. This is a hero of revolution, written à la Sukhanov; in his multivolume history, this 'saccharine-sweet' intellectual of 'Left' Menshevik persuasion pours forty pails of water on the mill of Trotskyism.²⁹

Here is a concise political biography of Trotskyism from the authoritative pen of comrade Lenin:

In 1903 he (Trotsky) was a Menshevik; he abandoned Menshevism in 1904, he returned to the Mensheviks in 1905 and merely flaunted ultra-revolutionary phrases; in 1906 he left them again; at the end of 1906 he advocated electoral agreements with the Cadets (i.e., he was in fact once more with the Mensheviks); and in the spring of 1907, at the London Congress, he said that he differed from Rosa Luxemburg on 'individual shades of ideas rather than on political tendencies'. One day Trotsky plagiarises

28 Lenin 1964ss, pp. 185–304.

29 v.i.'s reference to Sukhanov's history is extremely important and deserves close attention in any evaluation of our current dispute with comrade Trotsky, who is simply repeating Sukhanov on a whole range of issues, and is writing history 'à la Sukhanov' [original footnote]. [Sukhanov 1922–3, translated in part in Sukhanov 1984].

from the ideological stock-in-trade of one faction; the next day he plagiarises from that of another, and therefore declares himself to be standing *above* both factions.

Sobranie sochinenii, v. XI, part 2, pp. 307–38³⁰

Let us add a couple more of comrade Lenin's observations.

'People who (like the liquidators and Trotsky) ignore or falsify this twenty years' history of the ideological struggle in the working-class movement do tremendous harm to the workers'. That is what comrade Lenin wrote in the article 'The Ideological Struggle in the Workers' Movement' (see *Put' Pravdy*, 4 May 1914).³¹ 'Trotsky has never yet held a firm opinion on any important question of Marxism. He always contrives to worm his way into the cracks of any given difference of opinion, and desert one side for the other. At the present moment he is in the company of the Bundists and the liquidators. And these gentlemen do not stand on ceremony where the Party is concerned'. This is what Lenin wrote in an article in the newspaper *Prosveshchenie*, no. 4, 5, 6 for 1914.³²

'No matter what the subjective "good" intentions of Trotsky and Martov may be, their evasiveness objectively supports Russian social-imperialism'. That is what comrade Lenin wrote in *Sbornik Sotsial-demokrata*, no. 1, in October 1916.³³

If we add the fact that in the course of the entire imperialist war (1914–17), comrade Lenin systematically placed comrade Trotsky in the ranks of the Kautskyists (see, for example, Lenin's and Zinoviev's pamphlet 'Socialism and War');³⁴ if we recall that already at the April Conference of 1917, as well as in his letters on tactics written in April 1917, comrade Lenin came out decisively against the basic ideas of Trotskyism after the February Revolution as well – then we get a clear idea of comrade Lenin's evaluation of Trotskyism up to 1917.

We have already mentioned the literary milestones marking the path of Bolshevism. Let us compare them with the literary milestones marking the path of development of Trotskyism. These are the following books by comrade Trotsky: *Our Political Tasks* (1903), *Our Revolution* (1905–6) (by the way, comrade Trotsky's works were very successful with German Social Democracy, which

30 Lenin 1963h, p. 391.

31 Lenin 1964tt, p. 279.

32 Lenin 1964z, pp. 447–8.

33 Lenin 1964ii, p. 360.

34 Lenin 1964dd, pp. 295–338.

was already worn out by that time), then his collaboration with the liquidationist journal *Nasha zaria*, then a shining moment – his book on Kautsky (1919), and the *New Course* and *The Lessons of October* (1923–4).³⁵ The backwards evolution of comrade Trotsky is as plain as the palm of your hand in these last two works.

What was that booklet *Our Political Tasks* all about? That booklet, which appeared with a dedication to the Menshevik patriarch P.B. Axelrod, was the most vulgar little Menshevik pamphlet in the history of Menshevik literature. Going back to the ‘class’ drawing board in this booklet (we know that the Mensheviks had a system: having in fact prepared a political alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks loved to accuse the Bolsheviks of a lack of consistency in their class position), comrade Trotsky arrived at the conclusions of a liberal labour policy.

And what about that book *Our Revolution*, the most ‘leftist’ of Trotskyism’s early writings? That book (see also his book 1905)³⁶ laid out the foundations for the notorious theory of permanent revolution which comrade Trotsky is now trying to impose on Bolshevism. This ‘theory’ was always regarded by comrade Lenin and all the Bolsheviks as a variant of Menshevism. It is completely incomprehensible why for 15 years a variant of Menshevism should be declared to be a constituent part of Leninism, or even to be true Leninism, or to be a theory which rectifies the ‘errors’ of Leninism. But everybody remembers that in this ‘leftist’ book, in which comrade Trotsky, as it were, defended the ‘workers’ revolution’ against the Bolshevik idea of the ‘democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry’, Trotsky wrote:

How far, however, can the Socialist policy of the working class advance in the economic environment of Russia? One thing we can say with perfect assurance: it will meet political obstacles long before it will be checked by the technical backwardness of the country. *Without direct state political aid [gosudarstvennaia podderzhka] from the European proletariat the working class of Russia will not be able to retain its power and to turn its temporary supremacy into a permanent Socialist dictatorship* (Trotsky’s emphasis). We cannot doubt this for a moment.³⁷

35 Trotsky 1980b; Trotskii 1906; Trotsky 1961; Trotsky 1965a; Trotsky 1925a (see Document 1).

36 Trotsky 1972b.

37 Trotskii, *Nasha revoliutsiia*, 1906. Izd. Glagoleva, pp. 277–8 [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1906; in English, see Trotsky 1918a, pp. 136–7. I have added ‘state’ to the term ‘political aid’ to bring it closer in spirit to the Russian original].

What does 'state political aid from the European proletariat' mean? In order to be able to render 'state political aid' to the Russian revolution, the European proletariat would first have to win power in Europe. And yet there could be no question of this in 1905 and before the 1914–18 war in general. Yet Trotsky preached 'permanent' revolution in 1905.

What can we take from this? Either that Trotsky himself did not seriously believe in any permanent revolution in 1905 and said all this for the sake of an elegant turn of phrase, or that he preached 'permanent' revolution in 1905 only on the 'condition' that the European proletariat would render us 'state political aid', i.e. Trotsky 'postponed' the workers' revolution in Russia until the proletarian revolution had succeeded in Europe. In the latter case, Trotsky is acting as the representative of the most stereotypical Social-Democratic point of view: let 'them' make the revolution first, and then 'we' will 'immediately' make the workers' revolution. The actual bloc between Trotsky and the Mensheviks at precisely this time (let's remember Lenin's words: 'he returned to the Mensheviks in 1905') confirms the second alternative.

At that time Trotsky wrote a great deal about the victorious Russian revolution being only possible as part of a successful international revolution, because Western European capital was supporting tsarism with loans, etc. There was an element of truth in this, and Trotsky was only repeating here what the Bolsheviks had been saying. But as usual Trotsky understood this connection between the Russian revolution and the international revolution too mechanistically, he saw this connection too schematically, and posed the question too abstractly. And precisely this brought him to the loudly 'leftist', but completely abstract, political course in a vacuum, a course which was actually fashioned with the support of the Mensheviks.

There could be no question of 'state political aid' from the European proletariat in 1905. We still do not have this political aid, unfortunately, even in 1924. In the eighth year of our proletarian dictatorship, we are still not getting from England, for example, any 'political support' from the English proletariat, but ... a mark from Baldwin and Chamberlain. In practice comrade Trotsky's 'leftist'-phrased theory could be so easily reconciled with the support of hardcore Menshevism for 15 years precisely because this theory was 'leftist' in words only. The reason was all too obvious.

Comrade Trotsky did not understand the concrete path of revolution in our country. He still does not understand the true significance of the peasantry in our revolution even today. If any further proof of this were needed, comrade Trotsky provided it in his recent work, *The Lessons of October*. We ask the reader to consider the following extract from *The Lessons of October*:

It was precisely the immaturity of the revolution, in the context of the unique conditions created by the war, that handed the leadership to the petty-bourgeois revolutionaries, or at least the semblance of leadership, which consisted of their defence of the bourgeoisie's historical rights to power. *This does not mean at all, however, that the Russian revolution could only have taken the path it took from February to October 1917. The course taken resulted not only from class relations, but also from the temporary conditions created by the war* [our emphasis. G.Z.]. As a result of the war, the peasants were organised and armed in an army of many millions. Before the proletariat managed to organise itself under its own banner in order to carry the village masses along with it, the petty-bourgeois revolutionaries found a natural base in the army of peasants who had been enraged by the war. With the weight of this army of many millions – and, after all, everything depended directly on this army – the petty-bourgeois revolutionaries exerted pressure on the proletariat and carried them along for a while. That the revolution might have taken a different course, even with the very same class principles, is best demonstrated by events leading up to the war.

Uroki Oktiabria, pp. XVIII–XIX, 1917³⁸

Is this not a real ‘gem’ – as v.i. loved to say? When comrade Lenin speaks about the basic issue of the revolution, about the relationship between the proletariat and the peasantry, entire pages can be consulted in the anthology of Leninism. It is precisely ‘the opposite’ with Trotsky. Consider these words from Trotsky. Surely this little page of Trotskyist prose in the anthology can be consulted as evidence that it is not Bolshevism?

The road from February to October 1917 resulted, as you see, ‘not only from class relations, but also from the temporary (!) conditions created by the war’. What does this fantasy mean? It turns out that the war did not arise from class relations! It turns out that the war, you see, just happened! So it was an ‘accidentally accidental accident’. Now, the Russo-Japanese War, from which 1905 emerged, – the dress rehearsal for 1917 – was that also a chance event, was that also created by ‘temporary conditions’? What deep thinking! Had there been no imperialist war – and Leninism teaches, after all, that the imperialist war was the inevitable outcome of imperialism, the ‘highest stage of capitalism’ (Lenin), i.e. also therefore of the course of the class struggle; had Russia not been a peasant country and therefore had its multimillion-man army not been

38 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 92–3.

a peasant army; had this peasant army not been outraged by the imperialist war which the bourgeoisie was incapable of not fighting; and had the sheer weight of the multimillion-man peasantry not put pressure on the whole course of the socio-political life of the country, – then the revolution would have developed à la Trotsky and the astonished human race would have witnessed the apotheosis of Trotskyism!

This entire philosophy can be concisely and clearly summed up by the well-known Russian saying: 'if ifs and ands were pots and pans' [*ezheli by da kaby*].

If Russia had not been a peasant country, then Russian tsarism would not have been a constituent part of European imperialism; if the armies had not been needed for the war, then these armies would not have been outraged by the imperialist war; if the Russian working class had been active in some other Russia, and not in the country with a predominantly peasant population, – then ... then Trotskyism would have turned out to be in the right in its battle against Leninism.

Our author is apparently unaware of 'if ifs and ands were pots and pans', and that if there had been no imperialist war with all its inevitable consequences, then perhaps there would have been no revolution in 1917, and no such relatively easy victory at the outset. Our author is also apparently unaware that it was precisely the development of the revolution from February to October 1917 that confirmed 'in passing' the already obvious truth that all of Trotskyism with its theory of 'permanent revolution' was nothing more than a fanciful ideological schema tailored to the demands of Menshevism.

Let us listen to comrade Lenin again:

Hence their monstrous, idiotic, renegade idea (which has also thoroughly permeated *The Social Movement*) that the peasant *movement* is reactionary, that a Cadet is more progressive than a Trudovik, that the 'dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry' (= the classical presentation) *contradicts 'the entire course of economic development'* ... [I]n every crisis of *our* epoch (1905–09–??), a '*general democratic*' movement of the '*muzhik*' *will arise*, is bound to arise, and to ignore it would be a fundamental mistake which, *in practice*, would lead to Menshevism.

That is what comrade Lenin wrote in December 1909 (*Prolet. revoliutsiia*, no. 5–281, pp. 178–9).³⁹

39 Lenin 1963p, pp. 119–22.

But even in 1924 comrade Trotsky does not understand that the role of the 'little muzhik' in such a 'crisis' as 1917 was not accidental, and was not separate from the course of the class struggle.

Our author is apparently unaware that the course of the great revolution between February and October 1917 brilliantly confirmed Leninism, among other things in the way Lenin dealt in his typical ruthlessly theoretical way with the Trotskyist variant of Menshevism.

A collaborator of comrade Trotsky and the 'editor' of his volume 1917, comrade Lentsner, states in all seriousness that in the articles in the newspaper *Novyi mir* written by comrade Trotsky at the start of March 1917 in America (where the February Revolution found comrade Trotsky), he had already 'anticipated' comrade Lenin's formulation of the issue in his famous 'Letters from Abroad'. Indeed, these little articles (written by comrade Trotsky, by the way, when the ink had scarcely dried on his articles against the Zimmerwald Left) were mediocre little agitational pieces.

'Hey, you there, be quiet! You should hide your hireling mugs in some Black Hundred hole where the light of the revolution has never shone and will never shine!'⁴⁰ This excerpt from the aforementioned articles gives a clear enough idea of all these articles which so 'anticipated' Lenin. Comrade Trotsky did not even know what the question was, when comrade Lenin in his genuinely famous 'Letters from Afar' was already proposing to the Russian working class his plan for the real October, a plan worked out nearly to the last detail. But this would still have been only half the problem. Nobody expected comrade Trotsky to give the lie to the well-known French proverb that the most beautiful girl cannot give any more than she has. The problem is that comrade Trotsky can say nothing more intelligent than 'If ifs and ands were pots and pans', that if there had been no imperialist war and if the peasantry had not predominated in our country, then Trotsky rather than Leninism would have been correct.

Is any more proof needed that comrade Trotsky did not understand, and still does not understand, the Bolshevik position on the question of the peasantry?

You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Trotskyism, which presented itself as a variant of Menshevism until the war, will not look any better if it tries to cover itself in the silk of 'Leninism'.

The Lessons of October have clearly shown, alas, only one thing: that now, in the eighth year of the proletarian revolution, comrade Trotsky has not grasped the real essence of Leninism and, furthermore, that he is spinning 'on the spot' – on the question of the peasantry, on the question that is the chief source of

40 Trotsky, 1917, p. 21 [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1924g, p. 21].

comrade Trotsky's conclusions, beginning with his error on the Brest Peace and continuing with his error on the trade union question in 1921, and finishing with his current errors.



In *The Lessons of October*, there are almost as many wrong assertions as there are assertions. It is easier to list those exceptions when comrade Trotsky presented the factual side of the events from February to October more or less accurately than the instances when he ... deviated from the truth. We do not know a weaker and less 'savvy' work by comrade Trotsky in recent years. He failed completely to connect the dots. He was in such a rush to present his surprise to the party, he was so filled with the passionate desire to bestow more ... favours on the Central Committee of the party, that he performed his 'work' carelessly, which given comrade Trotsky's love for a 'planned' approach is quite surprising. That is why the Communist Youth had little difficulty working out that comrade Trotsky had confused Lenin with Hilferding (on the question of the Constituent Assembly and the so-called 'combined type' of the Constituent Assembly and the Soviets).⁴¹ That is why comrade Sokol'nikov exposes our esteemed author of *The Lessons of October*, comrade Trotsky, for ascribing the 'leftist' errors of comrade Bogdat'ev to ... comrade Lenin (the history of the April 1917 demonstrations). That is why comrade Kuusinen can easily show with documents in hand that in January 1924, on the question of the German Revolution,⁴² comrade Trotsky said exactly the opposite of what he is saying now in *The Lessons*

41 By the way, we learn from the second part of 1917 that as late as 29 November 1917 comrade Trotsky himself, at the behest of the Council of People's Commissars, wrote in one of the proclamations: 'The country can only be saved by the Constituent Assembly, which consists of representatives of the labouring and exploited classes of the people'. One might ask, in what way is this better than the 'combined type'? (1917, part 2, p. 133) [original footnote].

42 One example suffices: 'There (in Germany), in the latter half of last year, we saw here a classic demonstration of how to let slip a perfectly exceptional revolutionary situation of world historical significance' – that is what comrade Trotsky wrote in September 1924 in *The Lessons of October* [Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87]. 'If the party (the German CP) had declared the insurrection in October (of last year), as the Berlin comrades had proposed, it would now lie with its neck broken' – we can read these words in the draft theses of comrades Radek and Trotsky in January 1924. There cannot be two opinions on such a question – one in January 1924, and another in September 1924. And if one holds two opinions on such a question, one should not attack the Executive Committee of the Comintern, as comrade Trotsky has done [original footnote].

of October. That is why such important episodes of the revolution as the June demonstrations, the fight for Kronstadt, and even the July days are described by comrade Trotsky à la Sukhanov and even in the tone of the newspaper *Den'*, and not in the way these events played out in reality. This is why the question of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in relation to the Pre-parliament and the Democratic Conference are described so erroneously and tendentiously. These 'minor' errors have already been refuted by authoritative witnesses to the events. Perhaps we will manage elsewhere to return to a proper description of those very important episodes of the revolution, and explain them, incidentally, on the basis of numerous conversations with Vladimir Il'ich which were sometimes conducted over entire days and nights (for example, three weeks in the hay shelter [*shalash*], etc). In the meantime, let us move on to other issues which require immediate clarification.

Was There a Right Wing in the Bolshevik Party?

We must have an unequivocal answer to this question. Everybody who is familiar with the real history of Bolshevism will, without hesitation, reply to this question: there was not and there could not have been a right wing.

Why not?

Whoever knows the history of Bolshevism first-hand, whoever is not vainly invoking the word of Leninism, will find it easy to answer this question.

There could not have been one, because the very founding Leninist principle of the structure of the Bolshevik Party excludes any possibility of a right and a left wing.

There could not have been one, because Leninism is a monolithic party, a party cast from one mould.

There could not have been one, because the first split between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks had already happened in 1903 on the eve of the first revolution in 1905.

Comrade Lenin wrote of the Italian Socialist Party that even its first split from the most extreme chauvinists, several years before the World War – a split that was by no means complete or radical but superficial – that even this split helped the Italian Socialist Party in the first period of the imperialist war in 1914 to adopt a more modest position than the position of those SD parties which remained 'united' up to 1917 and after. Everybody who has read comrade Lenin's articles about German Social Democracy, written in 1914–15 (see the collection *Against the Stream*),⁴³ will remember how passionately comrade Lenin argued

43 Zinov'ev 1918b; see Lenin 1965g, p. 221.

for the split in German Social Democracy, what great hopes he placed in this split, how comrade Lenin explained the complete collapse of German Social Democracy as the result, by the way, of the belated split between the left and right wings in this party, etc.

Typical of the socialist parties of the epoch of the Second International was one that tolerated in its midst an opportunism built up in decades of the 'peaceful' period, an opportunism that kept itself secret, adapting itself to the revolutionary workers, borrowing their Marxist terminology, and evading any clear cleavage of principles. This type has outlived itself.

In Italy, the party was the exception for the period of the Second International; the opportunists, headed by [Leonida] Bissolati, were expelled from the party. In the present crisis, the results have proved *excellent*. [...] We are not at all idealising the Italian Socialist Party and in no way guarantee that it will stand firm should Italy enter the war. We are speaking not of the future of that party, but only of the present. We are stating the indisputable *fact* that the workers in most European countries have been *deceived by the fictitious unity* of the opportunists and the revolutionaries, Italy being the happy exception, a country where no such deception exists at present. What was a happy exception for the Second International should and *shall* become the rule for the Third International. While capitalism persists, the proletariat will always be a close neighbour to the petty bourgeoisie. It is sometimes unwise to reject temporary alliances with the latter, but *unity* with them, unity with the opportunists can be defended *at present* only by the enemies of the proletariat or by hoodwinked *traditionalists* of a bygone period.

Protiv techeniia, from the article 'What next?', pp. 32–3⁴⁴

44 Lenin 1964uu, p. 111. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'people of various trends of opinion have not deceived the workers or blinded them with pearls of eloquence regarding "unity"; each of them followed his own road. The opportunists (and deserters from the workers' party such as Mussolini) practised social-chauvinism, lauding (as Plekhanov did) "gallant Belgium", thereby shielding the policies, not of a gallant, but of a bourgeois Italy, which would plunder the Ukraine and Galicia ... I mean, Albania, Tunisia, etc., etc. Meanwhile, the socialists were waging *against them* a war against war, in preparation of a *civil* war'.

Whoever thinks about these words will understand why there could be no right wing in a party created by comrade Lenin in a struggle against the Mensheviks and Trotsky.

'Our Party long ago severed all organisational ties with the opportunist groups and elements; ... this circumstance helping it perform its revolutionary duty – just as the break [...] has helped the Italian comrades', wrote V.I. in the pamphlet *Socialism and War* (ch. 2).⁴⁵

'The British in the Independent Labour Party will, of course, heartily support such an amnesty for social-chauvinism if only it is concealed by a number of compliments for the Left. The [Menshevik. F.C.] Organising Committee members and Trotsky seem to be predestined to hang on to the coat-tails of Kautsky and Bernstein, at the present juncture', wrote comrade Lenin in the article 'The State of Affairs in Russian Social-Democracy' (*Protiv techeniia*, p. 87).⁴⁶

When Comrade Trotsky grasps all this, he will understand why it is not possible to speak of a right wing in the Bolshevik Party which was created by comrade Lenin in a 'fierce' struggle against all non-Bolshevik factions, groups, groupings, and tendencies.

Bolshevism did not develop on the German model or even on the Italian model. The entire power of Leninism derived from the fact that Bolshevism, led by comrade Lenin, already took up the struggle against the right wing of Social Democracy twenty years ago, and that this struggle was taken to its ultimate conclusion.

Whoever understands anything about the theory, tactics, and organising principles of Leninism cannot claim that the Bolshevik Party had a right wing. A right wing of Bolshevism is simply inconceivable. It is like saying: 'wooden steel'; or 'hot snow', etc. Bolshevism differed fundamentally from Menshevism in that it would not allow and did not allow the party to be organised as a bloc of all possible tendencies – right, left, centre, etc.

Let us remember what comrade Lenin wrote, for example, about the party's period of existence in the emigration. He said: the great abundance of political tendencies in the emigration – Menshevik, SRS, anarchists, maximalists, each of them subdivided into smaller groupings – meant that everything that was non-Bolshevik was peeled away from the Bolshevik Party like a plaster. The same was true for the period of legal and semi-legal existence of the party, espe-

45 Lenin 1964dd, p. 319. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'with Bissolati's opportunist party'.

46 Lenin 1964cc, p. 285.

cially between February and October 1917. At that time on the legal stage we saw the same abundance and variety of political parties, factions, minor factions, which inevitably absorbed everything that was not completely Bolshevik (vital examples of this were the prominent party workers of Bolshevism in 1905 such as I.P. Gol'denberg, Avilov, [Vladimir] Voitinskii); and so the Bolshevik Party became a crystallising point only for the Bolsheviks. Hence our party was cast from one mould.

One would have to be completely ignorant of Lenin and of Leninism to believe that Lenin could for even a short time tolerate the existence of a right wing in the Bolshevik Party. And even more important is the fact that Leninism itself would not be able to tolerate the idea of a right wing in the Bolshevik Party.

It might be objected that there were in fact Bolshevik conciliators who were very much like a right wing of Bolshevism.

Indeed there were. Bolshevik conciliators played an episodic role at the very start of the split between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks (1903–4), and then also in the years of the counter-revolution (1910–11). But it is a fact that the moment these Bolshevik conciliators wavered, there was in essence a split with them. The Bolshevik Party, led by comrade Lenin, was prepared to amputate this chunk and did amputate part of it – in order to remain a Bolshevik, i.e. homogeneous, party.

To understand the history of even this small group of Bolshevik conciliators, it is necessary to consider the following facts. The overwhelming majority (almost all) of the Bolshevik conciliators are now in our ranks, and no one would think of claiming that they constitute any kind of right wing in the party. The most prominent leader of the conciliationist tendency was the now deceased I.F. Dubrovinskii (Innokentii). But of the hundred comrades who knew him, a hundred would say that if Innokentii were alive today (he died in exile in 1912) he of course would not have been and could not have been a representative of any kind of right wing. This can be explained to a significant degree by the punitive conditions endured by the party at that time. People like Dubrovinskii and Nogin (also a conciliator at one time) moved from prison to prison, from exile to exile, and between one prison and the next they sometimes admitted occasional mistakes on organisational matters. Of course, if the errors had developed consistently, these comrades could have become the victims of opportunism. This though did not happen and could not have happened. And because he approached the matter case by case, comrade Lenin put the question bluntly, and the matter could end only with expulsion from the Bolshevik ranks or with genuine submission to the Bolshevik centre.

This does not mean at all that the long years of the history of Bolshevism, profoundly substantive, never saw any disagreements or tendencies among

the most prominent officials of the Bolshevik Party. It would be quite absurd to expect that. Such disagreements existed. In 1906, for example, comrade Kamenev defended the boycott of the State Duma (a 'leftist' position) at the same time as comrade Lenin favoured participation in it. In 1910, in the plenum of the CC (the last joint plenum with the Mensheviks), some Bolsheviks decided to try to come together with Trotsky at a time when comrade Lenin and other members of the Bolshevik centre (including the present author of these lines) were emphatically against such an attempt. But these were merely episodic disagreements.

However, the disagreements with the Vperedists in 1908, which lasted for several years, cannot be called episodic. These pseudo-'leftists' were in fact defending opportunistic tactics, i.e. they were rejecting the principles of Bolshevism. And for precisely this reason, a split could not be avoided. The Vpered group was expelled from the Bolshevik organisation, and only those who radically purged themselves of Vperedism [*Vperedovstvo*] have come back to our party.

Similarly, the disagreements over the war, which, it is true, extended only to a few prominent Bolsheviks at the start of the imperialist war, cannot be called episodic. It is generally well-known that Bolshevism adopted a thoroughly correct position against the imperialist war and saw the world historical significance of the slogan 'transformation of the imperialist war into civil war'. But a few prominent Bolshevik functionaries (for example, the late I.P. Gol'denberg) vacillated on the issue of the nature of the war, and this immediately caused an organisational break with these comrades. I.P. Gol'denberg was only able to return to the party in 1920–1 after he had thoroughly recognised his error.

How to explain some of these errors in the first days of the February Revolution? The General Staff of the Bolsheviks came together from various parts of the world after several years of imperialist war and white terror, having broken the link between the closest friends and central functionaries of Bolshevism. Some returned to Petrograd from distant places of emigration, others from forced labour prisons, and still others from the most forsaken corners of Siberian exile. All were overwhelmed by events of great world-historical significance. At first, a great deal turned out differently than expected. In the first days of the revolution, the Bolsheviks were an insignificant [*neznachitel'nyi*] minority even among the workers of Petrograd. The mood of the many millions of soldiers, whom v.i. later called 'honest defencism',⁴⁷ created huge tactical difficulties: how to approach these masses, how to get them even to listen to the first

47 Lenin 1964vv, pp. 204–6.

speeches of the Bolsheviks? Taken together, this all created those difficulties which led to the mistakes of *Pravda* in the first days after the February Revolution – before the arrival of comrade Lenin.

But can the existence of a right wing in the Bolshevik Party be inferred from this, a right wing which comrade Trotsky – none other than Trotsky himself – tries to characterise as a 'Social-Democratic', 'semi-Menshevik' wing?⁴⁸ Only someone who did not know and does not know the Bolshevik Party can say such a thing, only someone who judges 'from the sidelines', and for whom the history of this party is only the history of a party with which this individual has been 'in a battle' for 15 years, an individual who is still 'in a battle with it' in 1924.

Serious disagreements existed among the Bolsheviks between April and September 1917. Groupings could have emerged from these disagreements if the erroneous comrades had persisted in their errors, if the events themselves had not quickly resolved these errors, if the party had not unanimously repudiated these errors, if the party had not had Lenin, etc. Then a split or a breakaway would have occurred, but in no way would a right wing have formed. But it is also a fact that all these 'ifs' did not and could not come to pass in reality.

Sharp disagreements existed among the Bolsheviks between October and November 1917. During this period (and only then), the author of these lines was among those who erred. If the mistakes had not been immediately recognised, if the party had not unanimously rectified them, if again the party had had no Lenin – then of course even such short-lived, but sharp, disagreements could have had serious consequences. But, in fact, the opposite occurred.

The split between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks began in 1903. Bolshevism led a completely independent organisational existence from approximately 1910. Between 1903 and 1910, a certain lack of clarity existed in the structure of the Bolshevik organisation. From 1910 to 1917, this became impossible. There was and could be no right wing in the Bolshevik Party. To maintain the contrary even once would betray a complete ignorance of the principles of Bolshevism.

Is the Formation of a Right Wing in the RCP Possible Now?

The truly germane question – germane not only for our party but also for the entire Comintern – is not whether the Bolsheviks had a right wing in 1917, but whether a right wing exists now, whether there is a tendency towards such a

48 I am unable to find the specific reference to 'semi-Menshevik', although Trotsky does refer to a group of Bolsheviks between February 1917 and February 1918 taking an 'essentially Social-Democratic position' (Trotsky, Document 1, p. 134).

right wing, and whether it is possible (and permissible) to form such a right wing in the RKP.

Our reply to this question is: yes, an attempt is now underway to create such a wing in the RKP and in the Comintern. The main figure in this affair is comrade Trotsky. The real problem afflicting the party now is whether we can tolerate the formation of such a wing, and if not, how we can avoid it.

Where might a right wing (or 'little wing [*krylyshko*]'), or a right faction or a right tendency, which comrade Trotsky wants to create, arise from? It would be absurd and stupid to ascribe personal responsibility for this to one or another comrade. No, undoubtedly, objective preconditions must exist as well.

What are the essential differences between the present state of affairs in our party and the position of our party before the October Revolution? There are several differences.

First: The Mensheviks, SRS, anarchists and other groups disappeared from the open arena of political life in our country. There can be no question of the former plethora of various political parties, trends, tendencies etc. – at least insofar as this means open competition before the broad circles of workers and peasants. In the interest of successfully carrying out the dictatorship of the proletariat, the victorious working class, under the leadership of our party, had no choice but to remove the legal status of the SRS, Mensheviks, anarchists (the anti-Soviet tendency) and other groupings which were hostile to the very idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only the RKP is legally active. And it cannot be otherwise in the present period. Given this state of affairs, it is inevitable that many elements are now supporting our party (and sometimes even directly joining its ranks) which would not be with us if other legal parties existed. This most important circumstance in itself can in no way help to increase the homogeneity of our party.

Second: We have ideologically crushed the two main parties which have been our rivals for the past two decades; the SRS and the Mensheviks. Tens of thousands of former members of these parties have joined our ranks, including thousands and thousands of former SRS and Mensheviks who were active members of these parties. It suffices to mention comrade Trotsky.

There is no need to repeat that most of these comrades, who left the ranks of parties which were foreign to us, have fully assimilated now into our party, and are, or want to be and will be, good Bolsheviks. But we must not be blind to the fact that the destruction of the SRS and Mensheviks as legal parties, and the fact that tens of thousands of their most active members have come over to us, will in no way foster the homogeneity of our party.

Third: Our country is going through a transitional period. Until October 1917, the situation was in many respects more difficult, but clearer. The party faced

an immediate battle: the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. The present situation is in many respects more complicated. It is multi-faceted. The NEP, the world-wide bourgeois environment – all these factors make the situation extremely complicated. Never before in the history of the working-class struggle all over the world has a worker's party had to deal with such a complicated transitional period.

Fourth: The social composition of the party has become heterogeneous. Until October 1917, our party was made up almost entirely of workers, but after 1917 the situation changed. After all of the vicissitudes experienced by our party over the past seven years, our ranks now include more than 100,000 party members who are peasants, several tens of thousands of party members in institutions of higher education (by no means all of them workers), and tens of thousands of party members who are Soviet officials, etc.

What is the meaning of all our efforts to regulate the social composition of the party; what is the meaning, in the final analysis, of our purges [*chistki*], new elections, and in part the Lenin Levy, etc? All of this is a link in the chain of efforts to make the party as homogeneous as possible, to prevent any dilution of its social composition, and not to permit inordinate heterogeneity in the social composition of the party.

All these together create the prerequisites for the possible formation of a right wing in the Bolshevik Party created by Lenin.

And if we add to this the not insignificant factor that comrade Lenin himself is no longer with us, then it will become clear how critical the situation is becoming.

If we take all of comrade Trotsky's attacks on the Bolshevik CC and purge them of everything that is accidental, personal and superficial, if we deal with these attacks as objectively as possible, then it becomes clear that they have the following significance. Throughout those years, comrade Trotsky was the expression in our party of everything that was not strictly Bolshevik. As the expression of these non-Bolshevik moods, comrade Trotsky was closely constrained by the old Leninist tactics. He was sincerely convinced that the old methods of Leninism were no longer suitable at a time when the party was operating in such a vast arena. In his opinion, the party should have become a bloc of various unformed tendencies, factions, and hues.

We all know that our party, which is in power and which has suppressed all other non-Soviet parties, inevitably must reflect one way or another those social processes which are developing or which are still just beginning to take shape across the entire country. We Leninists draw the conclusion from this that the greatest homogeneity of the party, the greatest firmness of leadership, and the greatest devotion to Leninism in the party are needed all the more.

Not in order that the party stuff its ears with cotton wool and try not to hear what is bruited in the country. On the contrary. It is necessary to manoeuvre, sometimes to make concessions. But to do this the party must always remain itself, i.e. the Bolshevik Party. Leninism knows what it knows: manoeuvring, retreating, attacking, adapting to the most complex situation, it always remains Bolshevism, i.e. it pursues the interests of the proletariat in a peasant country.

Meanwhile, comrade Trotsky draws different conclusions from the complex nature of the present situation (or rather they form in him). He thinks that the earlier 'sectarian' (quasi-sectarian), flint-hearted Bolshevism, suitable somehow only for a 'circle', is now leading to the 'ruin of the country'. He thinks that the party must now be an alliance of different trends and factions, and that it should not directly guide the state and economic apparatus but leave more scope for bourgeois specialists, etc.

Taken to its logical conclusion, this idea of comrade Trotsky – in the present international and domestic situation – could lead at best to the substitution of the Bolshevik Party of Leninism with some kind of 'broad', 'labour' party, a 'Soviet version' of the English MacDonald Labour Party – such a 'broad' party might combine all organisations of 'toilers', including those who cannot be called Bolshevik in the direct sense of the word. It is quite possible that comrade Trotsky has not thought his idea through to its logical conclusion, but logically it leads inevitably to precisely that, unless he stops and comes back to Bolshevism.

A party, which operates under such conditions as we are experiencing now, of course needs a number of transmission mechanisms leading to the entire worker masses, including their backward strata. It needs a series of primary belts to secure its influence among the peasantry, among the civil servants, in the intelligentsia, etc. The system of levers securing the dictatorship of the proletariat is complex (Soviets, trade unions, etc.). But it by no means follows from this that the party itself can become a bloc of tendencies, factions, a kind of 'parliament of opinions', with a right wing, a left wing, a centre, and other niceties of parliamentarianism.

The question should not be oversimplified. Of course, the Bolshevik Party in 1924 cannot simply copy the Bolshevik Party of, say, 1914, or even of 1917. We cannot and must not now limit ourselves to admitting only workers as members into our party. Through the Lenin Levy, we did everything possible to increase the proportion of industrial workers in our party. For a couple of years we held back the influx of peasants into the party. Nonetheless, now we have come to the conclusion that we must again open the doors of the party to a significant number of peasants. A workers' party which governs the state in a peasant country must contain a certain percentage of peasant members.

It all boils down to the fact that in the USSR we are confronted not by the tasks of a workers' party 'in general', but by the tasks of a workers' party in a peasant country. This is why the issue of the social composition of the party is so complex, once this party is running the state.

And so the situation is by no means simple, the difficulties are great. Regulating the composition of our party is a complex and difficult matter. It is closely connected with the most difficult and sometimes the most delicate political problems. The party must manoeuvre in this situation too, i.e. vis-à-vis its own social composition. In the present era the party cannot be as homogeneous as it was before the conquest of power.

But the policy of the party, and also the leadership of the party, must remain Bolshevik through and through, as Lenin taught. The working class realises its hegemony in the revolution, and our party is the leading vanguard of this hegemonic class.

Of course the properly understood interests of the hegemonic class demand well-known concessions to the peasantry, and the adaptation of the entire policy to several fundamental interests of the peasantry. But the limits of these concessions, the limits of this adaptation, are set by the working class and its vanguard, based on the basic interests of the revolution and its hegemonic class – the working class.

This raises the question of the internal orientation of the party, what they call 'intraparty politics'. The Bolshevik Party, operating in the conditions of 1924, must orientate itself to the core group of its own members – the workers. Neither the youth membership nor any other strata in our party can serve as the 'barometer' of the policies of our party; only the workers can do this.

And so, can we permit the existence or formation of a right wing in our party now?

We cannot!

The fact that we have to put up with a lack of homogeneity in the social composition of our party, and that we have to attract a certain number of non-workers into our party as members, in no way means that we can water down the policies of the party, that the leadership of the party should be heterogeneous, that the leadership of the party should be a bloc of factions, etc. On the contrary, precisely because the party cannot be as homogeneous in its composition in the present circumstances as it was before the conquest of power, the policies of the party must be orientated more strictly than it ever has been towards the workers in the party above all else. And precisely because of this the leadership of the party must be especially firm and especially Leninist. And precisely because of this, there can be no thought of our leadership being a bloc of factions and tendencies.

The objective conditions in which our party must operate now are such that there is a present danger of a right wing (or tendency, or direction) forming in our party. Whoever wishes to remain faithful to the spirit of Leninism must devote all their energy to helping the party resist this tendency. With the skillful and correct application of the principles of Leninism in the present concrete situation, we will manage to prevent the formation of a right wing in our party.

Those who, like comrade Trotsky, not only do not resist this tendency but express it, those who embark on a struggle against the Leninist Central Committee which clearly recognises the danger and is manoeuvring under difficult conditions – they will become enemies of Leninism.

Whether they intend to do this or not – is irrelevant. Whether they clearly recognise this or not – is also irrelevant. Facts are facts.

Perhaps it would be better to express our thinking even more directly. Let us take for example two prominent comrades (let us say, comrade A and comrade B). Both comrades are the most disciplined and wonderful comrades. Comrade A though came to Bolshevism at a different time and by a different route than comrade B. Comrade A came from the peasant movement that poured out in a great wave during the years of civil war after the October overthrow. Comrade B came from the workers' movement that joined Bolshevism twenty years ago. Our party needs and values both. Only the actual alliance of both elements, represented by these two, could guarantee the total victory of the revolution. But suppose that comrade A started expressing inside the party those things that often distinguish the peasant communist (and the non-party person who is affiliated with the communists) from the worker communist, suppose that he began to demand that the policy of the party be orientated not towards the workers but towards the peasants, or suppose that he demanded that the leadership of the party transform itself into a bloc of different groups, what would our party say to comrade A in that instance?

Something similar to the above example, but in far more serious form, is now being done by comrade Trotsky. He is becoming the expression of everything in the party that is not Bolshevik. He is demanding that the party align itself with everything that is not Bolshevik (in the real sense of the word) in it.

Can the party tolerate this? Is it any wonder that the party is dealing such a harsh rebuke to comrade Trotsky?

Where is Comrade Trotsky's Present Evolution Leading?

This is the main issue in our dispute. In order to provide the clearest answer to this, we ask you to consider the following situation.

Of course, comrade Trotsky, as a clear individualist, possesses many features that are characteristic only of him personally. Pertinent in this regard is the

'egotism' (from the word 'I'), as one worker put it recently after reading *The Lessons of October*, which fills comrade Trotsky's recent writings. Also pertinent is that comrade Trotsky sometimes creates the kind of political platform which can only be occupied by one person: comrade Trotsky himself. For this 'platform' literally has no room even for like-minded people. So it is necessary to state the individualistic aspect of comrade Trotsky's position. It would be a mistake however to see only individualism in comrade Trotsky's position. Without doubt, he reflects something broader about our situation.

What exactly?

Pay attention, reader, to the following circumstance. Since 1922, and even more since 1923, the prosperity of the country has undoubtedly grown, and the material situation and the mood of the workers have improved. But at the same time all of comrade Trotsky's actions show us that it was precisely in these years that his political mood became worse and worse. The trajectory of the political mood of the broad masses of the workers of our country is heading upwards, the trajectory of comrade Trotsky's political mood is downwards. Against this backdrop, the disagreements are deepening between comrade Trotsky and the party which is after all nothing less than the lead brigade of the worker masses.

Comrade Trotsky is paying a great tribute to impressionism, more and more often he sees things only in dark colours, predicts the 'ruin of the country' (before last year's discussion) on the eve of the undoubted improvement in its economic situation, waves his finger in the air more and more, while making incorrect diagnoses and proposing yet more incorrect remedies, and he loses his own supporters, etc. Remember that in his first clash with comrade Lenin and the Leninist CC during the argument over the Brest peace, comrade Trotsky had a considerable portion of the party on his side. During the second clash with comrade Lenin and the Leninist CC in 1921 (the discussion on trade unions), comrade Trotsky also still had about a fifth of the Congress on his side. And this was when the whole party was under the spell of Vladimir Il'ich! During last year's discussion, comrade Trotsky's following was already significantly smaller, although there were still hundreds of people who were ready to defend his platform to the end. And in comrade Trotsky's present attack on the Leninist CC, the volunteers defending comrade Trotsky's platform can be counted on one's fingers. And this has not happened just by chance.

How can this odd situation be explained? The economy is on the up, the mood of the workers is improving, the unity of the party is becoming firmer, and the mood of one of the pretenders to the leadership of the worker's movement (comrade Trotsky) is in terminal decline. This one fact alone shows that in recent years comrade Trotsky, without wanting this himself of course, has

not always expressed the moods of the proletarian masses but has sometimes inadvertently expressed the mood of other strata of the population.

Which strata exactly? Of course the answer to this question is not so simple. If we follow the tortuous path of comrade Trotsky's developing platform, if we examine as meticulously as possible his recent political evolution over the past two to three years, it is not difficult to encounter apparent contradictions, and to another less worldly comrade it might seem sometimes as if comrade Trotsky is criticising our Leninist CC not from the right but from the left.

Indeed, is it not comrade Trotsky for example who is accusing the CC and its representatives in the Comintern of 'missing' the German revolution? This is surely a criticism 'from the left'? But if we consider comrade Trotsky's position on precisely those questions connected with the tactics of the Comintern, if we remember that side by side with the 'leftist' phrases written by comrade Trotsky on this matter there is now the fact of his support for the right wing of the German party throughout 1923, and the fact that on the other hand right-wing elements in all the sections of the Comintern supported comrade Trotsky's position in last year's discussion – then the question is seen in quite a new light. If we remember that already in January 1924 the draft resolutions of comrades Trotsky, Radek and Piatakov stated that if in October 1923 the German Communist Party had entered into an insurrection, then now (in January 1924) it would be a heap of ruins – then it becomes clear that here too, as in all other questions addressed by him in *The Lessons of October*, comrade Trotsky did not connect all the dots.

All of this is not always clear to the superficial observer of our disputes. This is why someone might mistakenly take comrade Trotsky's criticism of our CC as criticism from the left. In comrade Trotsky's actions, we say again, there is much that is individualistic, much that is capricious, much that is superficially dazzling. His platform has not completely formed yet. Comrade Trotsky's political position shimmers with all the colours of the rainbow.

The following analogy could be used. Take the great arc of the various colours of electric light bulbs. It is very bright. You are confronted by all of the colours of the rainbow, by many bulbs – red, green, blue, white. And yet the colour of the bulbs is ultimately a matter of secondary concern. Behind it all is one particular medium: electricity. So it is now with comrade Trotsky's current position. On the surface it also shimmers with all of the colours of the rainbow. It is our task to understand what the substance is, what the foundation is. And here we maintain that the foundation consists of some kind of 'negative matter [*minus-materia*]', of something which is non-Bolshevism, which for the time being can be described only as non-Leninism.

Where does this superficial colourfulness come from? The explanation lies in the fact that comrade Trotsky has not yet finished developing politically. The explanation lies first and foremost in the fact that comrade Trotsky's retrogressive evolution is taking place during a period of transition. A great deal is unclear in this transitional period, a great deal is unclear in the whole motley fabric of the NEP. After all, comrade Trotsky is now departing not from Bolshevism 'in general' but from Bolshevism during the transitional period of the NEP.

Through all this variety, through all of comrade Trotsky's improvisations, through the whole tortuous path of his capricious political development in recent years, one definite tendency beats its own path.

Let us imagine for a moment how our country and our party would look, if our party, instead of fiercely resisting comrade Trotsky's prescriptions, had accepted his most important proposals since 1921. Let us discard the least important and keep only the most important of comrade Trotsky's proposals since 1921.

If we had adopted comrade Trotsky's proposals, this would have meant:

1. The trade unions would have become state institutions, and the notorious 'fusion' of trade unions with the official state and economic organs would have taken place. In other words, the trade unions, which now constitute our widest base and unite six million workers and state officials, would have become a bureaucratic appendage of the state machinery. In other words, we would have created with our own hands an inexhaustible base for Menshevism, and consequently we would with our own hands have placed a landmine under the dictatorship of the proletariat.

2. The party would have been excluded from the direct leadership of the economic and state organs. The Soviet apparatus (remember what comrade Lenin wrote about it) would have become more independent. 'The emancipation of the Soviets from the party' would not only have remained on the pages of the writings of those in the 'Change of Signposts' movement [*smenovekhovtsy*], but would have begun to be a reality – even if only in part. It is hardly necessary to point out to a Bolshevik that such a tendency would have had numerous disastrous consequences.

3. The bourgeois specialists would have received far more influence in all branches of our work – not only in military matters but in everything else as well. It is hardly necessary to point out that this was one of the most important features of comrade Trotsky's political platform and one of the most important points of his disagreements with our party.

Let us not misrepresent ourselves. Of course, it is absolutely essential to attract honest specialists and to create an atmosphere that will enable them to

render useful service for the cause. Of course, everything that comrade Lenin has said on this issue and everything that our party has decreed, is still valid. There can of course be no talk of any encouragement of specific 'anti-specialist' moods. If however the issue of the specialists had been resolved not according to Lenin but according to Trotsky, this would have indeed meant the greatest political concession to the new bourgeoisie.

4. On the questions of intraparty life, we would have had to recognise that the 'barometer' of the party was not so much the workers from the benches as young people in the higher educational establishments, who include of course excellent proletarian elements, but also not a few people who are connected by thousands of social ties with the petty bourgeoisie and through it also with the NEP and with the new bourgeoisie.

5. We would not have had currency reform, because according to Trotsky it would have been necessary 'first' to restore industry, and then to take up currency reform. There is no need to mention that if we had accepted his 'ingenious' proposal, the weight of the socialist elements of the economy in our country would only have been reduced, and thus the new bourgeoisie would have become stronger.

6. On the question of the peasantry, which comrade Trotsky is always skipping over, we would have committed the greatest errors. Instead of beginning an alliance, we would now be cut off from them completely. Alienated by our political errors, the peasantry would have sought out another political leader and found it of course only in the new bourgeoisie.

No thoughtful comrade can say that we have made up the above six points (and there are more). Every serious Bolshevik will have to admit that this is why there has been a struggle between the Leninist CC and comrade Trotsky, and not because of the snows of yesteryear, not because of errors committed seven years ago, and not because of 'personalities', as the philistines think.

What, we ask, would our country have looked like if we had followed the path urged by comrade Trotsky on these six questions, if we had not with Bolshevik impatience repudiated these errors by comrade Trotsky? What would Russia have become then? It would have become NEP Russia but in a form and to an extent determined by the ideology of the new bourgeoisie. And the prospects of transforming NEP Russia into socialist Russia (comrade Lenin's bequest) would have been extremely remote and might even have disappeared.

If we add comrade Trotsky's opportunistic errors on international political questions to all this (overestimating the democratic pacifist era, overestimating the peace-making qualities of American super-imperialism, underestimating the counter-revolutionary nature of Social Democracy, underestimating the duration of fascism), and also his support for all the rightist, semi-Social-

Democratic elements in the various sections of the Comintern, then it becomes clear where comrade Trotsky is taking our party.

As he stacks one error on top of the other, comrade Trotsky has his own 'system'. Taken as a whole, this system is called 'rightist deviation'.

The new bourgeoisie of our country is indeed a new one, and not the old bourgeoisie. It has seen things, and it has learnt something from *The Lessons of October*. It has seen the masses in action. It has seen the Bolsheviks' ruthless reprisals against the bourgeoisie at the start of the October Revolution and their concession to the bourgeoisie in 1921, when these same ruthless Bolsheviks were forced to introduce the NEP. It now knows the value of the true constellation of forces, expressed in, among other things, the international bourgeois environment of the first Soviet state. It has its own new intelligentsia, educated for the most part in our educational establishments. It has learned to infiltrate the struggle of the tendencies within our own party. It has learned to take advantage of Soviet legality. This is no longer just the Kolupaevs and the Razuvaevs. This is a bourgeoisie which has passed through the fire of the greatest revolution. It is a bourgeoisie which can imagine its own alliance with the upper reaches of the peasantry, with the leaders of the international bourgeoisie. In short, this is a bourgeoisie with a subtle class instinct, more flexible and wiser from its revolutionary experience, and better able to understand the significance of the workers' party and the nuances within this party, etc. Suffering has taught this bourgeoisie to value its access to the minds of the popular masses. We must not ignore the fact that the social composition of our state apparatus is such that a significant part of the personnel of this apparatus must be regarded as an agency of this new bourgeoisie. The same applies to a certain section of the new student body and of the new intelligentsia in general.

To demand the following from the Bolshevik Party in 1921–4 in a period of transition: 1) statified trade unions; 2) more 'freedom' for the state apparatus from the supervision of the party; 3) more influence for the specialists; 4) use the higher educational establishments as a barometer for the future direction of party policy; 5) advise that the currency reform be delayed and shout about the ruin of the country; 6) launch a semi-Menshevik campaign against the party officials and in favour of 'democracy' as defined by comrade Trotsky last year – all of this means, even unintentionally, assistance to the new bourgeoisie.

Comrade Trotsky wants one thing but ends up getting something different. He wants to fight against the extreme 'sectarianism' of the Old Bolsheviks, against what he sees as 'the narrowness of the circles', but in fact he is fighting against the principles of Bolshevism. Of course, without wanting to he is in fact rendering invaluable service to the class enemy.

With our hands on our hearts, we ask the former and current followers of comrade Trotsky: are they not aware that every attack by comrade Trotsky on the Bolshevik CC, starting in 1921, is an ever-increasing joy for the entire non-Bolshevik camp, and the further he goes, the more joyful it is? Is this an accident?

Let us not misrepresent this. Marx has already said: 'It is possible actually to express the moods of the petty bourgeoisie without oneself being a small shopkeeper'.⁴⁹ Of course, comrade Trotsky has the very best intentions. But the road to hell is paved with good intentions. Comrade Trotsky must once and for all stop 'saving' our party from supposed errors, and understand and recognise his own political errors which stem to a significant degree from the remnants of his political ideology of the 1903 to 1917 period, when comrade Trotsky was an open opponent of Bolshevism. He must stop stirring up routine 'crises' in the party 'on a scheduled basis' every year, and more recently every six months. He must understand that no one should be able to use Trotskyism in a high-handed way to crush Leninism. He must understand, in short, that Bolshevism is Bolshevism.

What is To be Done?

What is the way out of this state of affairs? What is to be done?

A split? Rubbish! That is out of the question. Our party is more united than it ever has been.

A breakaway? Rubbish! Almost no one will break away, and the party does not want it to come to this.

Reprimands in the party? This is also rubbish! No one needs that; something else is needed.

What is needed?

The party must *protect itself* against any repetition of these 'attacks' on Leninism. Real guarantees are needed from the party that the resolutions of the party will be binding on comrade Trotsky as well. The party is not a debating society but a *party*, which moreover is operating in this complicated situation of ours. Today's slogan is:

Bolshevise all the strata of the party! An ideological struggle against Trotskyism!

And above all – explain, explain, and explain again.

49 The closest quotation I can find to this is: 'So, the ideology of the petty bourgeoisie does not have to be that of shopkeepers' (Marx and Engels 1957, p. xi). [FC – refers to a Russian-language edition – do we keep the Russian transliteration or convert it to more common forms of their names. If the latter, it affects the biblio entry]

More than half of our party is made up of relatively young members of the organisation. Many of them grasp Trotsky's anti-Leninist mistakes if only through their class instincts.

The entire party must study the question of Leninism and Trotskyism. The entire party must see clearly that it is a question here of two fundamentally different systems of tactics and politics.

This is not only about the history of the party, it is not only about the past. It is about two approaches to present-day politics, which are closely connected with such cardinal questions as the question of the relationship between the working class and the peasantry.

The bolshevisation of our own ranks – since the younger strata of the party have not yet had the opportunity to attend the school of Leninism – this is the serious task of the day. And here we must thank comrade Trotsky for at least providing the party with a good opportunity to make a clear analysis of this deviation from Leninism and think more deeply about the principles of Bolshevism.

Of course, the party must insist that comrade Trotsky too be bound by party discipline. And we are sure that the party can achieve this. The clearer the party can make the principles defining Leninism and Trotskyism, the less soil there will be for the kinds of attempts undertaken by comrade Trotsky. The less resonance there is in the party for this attempt, the less desire there will be to repeat it. And there is in truth little resonance at the present time. Comrade Trotsky has now changed the appearance of his 'platform' in such a way that it is essentially able to accommodate only one person, and that is comrade Trotsky himself – this 'little square' has no room for anybody else, even for those who up till now have partially supported comrade Trotsky as he made his mistakes.

During the last discussion, comrade Trotsky declared that the student youth was the truest 'barometer'. We did not agree then that it was really the best barometer. We do not agree with it now. However, it must be said that even this not quite ideal barometer has not responded this time as it did last year – this shows that the student youth does not want to replace Leninism with Trotskyism.

The best way to keep comrade Trotsky from making future errors that will alienate him even more from Bolshevism is to give a single, unanimous rebuke to his current error. If the entire party, as one person, comes out against comrade Trotsky's present deviation, then he will hopefully soon rectify his error.

Of course, everything we are talking about is not the final product yet. It is just a tendency. Hopefully, when comrade Trotsky grasps the harmfulness of this tendency, when he sees the complete unanimity of the party against his enormous error, he will turn back from his wrong path.

Comrade Lenin has repeatedly formulated the 'law' of comrade Trotsky's political evolution: when things are going well, comrade Trotsky for the most part moves closer to the Bolshevik line; when things are going badly or when the tide is turning, then comrade Trotsky swings to the right. To hold him back from his current very extreme swing to the right, the entire party must deliver an ideological rebuke.

The party will deliver its final word, and once again the premature, malicious hopes of the enemies will be disappointed. And the Bolshevik Party will be tempered again, even more powerfully, and true Leninism will become the ideological currency of every last member of our party.

‘An Unsuccessful Depiction of the “German October” (Comrade Trotsky’s “The Lessons of October”)’¹

O. Kuusinen

In the latter half of last year, we saw here a classic demonstration of how to let slip a perfectly exceptional revolutionary situation of world historical significance.

TROTSKY in September 1924 in *Uroki Oktiabria*)²

...

If the (German) party had proclaimed an insurrection in October (of last year), as proposed by the Berlin comrades, it would now be lying with its neck broken.

From a draft of theses by TROTSKY and RADEK in January 1924)³

∴

Both in September 1923 and in January 1924, I had the opportunity in my capacity as secretary to take part in the commissions on the German question formed under the Executive Committee of the Comintern; I am therefore not only familiar with the attitude of the Executive Committee as a whole but also with the position of individual leading comrades in the Comintern vis-à-vis the October events in Germany. I was therefore extremely surprised to see how comrade Trotsky covered these matters in his introduction to 1917 (‘The Lessons of October’). After all, these events are barely seven years old – and

1 O. Kuusinen, ‘Neudavsheesia izobrazhenie ‘nemetskogo Oktiabria’’, *Pravda*, no. 273, 30 November 1924, pp. 5–6.

2 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

3 I am unable to locate this quotation. The extant sections of the theses are reproduced in *Deutscher Oktober* 2003, pp. 403–6.

it is incomprehensible how such recent facts can be distorted. As these facts are still not generally well-known, comrade Trotsky's picture of them must be contrasted with the actual state of affairs.

The Charge

Comrade Trotsky devoted his 'The Lessons of October' to the development and elucidation of the following subject. The experience of the Russian October, and the experiences of many European countries, especially the experience of the 'abortive German October',⁴ as he puts it, tell us one and the same thing. At the decisive moment, on the eve of armed insurrection, several leading comrades from our own ranks rose up against the insurrection. In Russia however, thanks to the pressure exerted by comrade Lenin, and thanks to comrade Trotsky's direct collaboration, the insurrection was launched and victory was won. During the 'German October' of 1923 however, the insurrection was not started, even though, as comrade Trotsky puts it, 'all the conditions for a revolution are in place, with the exception of a far-sighted and resolute party leadership'.⁵ The revolutionary nature of this situation was not recognised in time, and nobody emerged who was able to put pressure on the CC which was trying to hold it back. For this reason, neither an insurrection nor a seizure of power occurred. The German October did not happen. We saw only 'a classic demonstration of how to let slip a perfectly exceptional revolutionary situation of world historical significance'.⁶

For comrade Trotsky, this drama of the German October played against the backdrop of the history of the Russian October. Comrade Trotsky describes in detail how resolutely he himself acted in 1917, and in even greater detail how several other comrades tried to pursue a 'political course of refusing to fight'.⁷ These comrades – 'opponents of the insurrection'⁸ – had wildly overestimated the forces of the enemy just two weeks before the bloodless victory of the Bolsheviks in Petrograd ('even Lenin believed that the enemy had serious forces in Petrograd').⁹ According to comrade Trotsky, the leaders of the German party last year were also guilty of overestimating enemy forces:

4 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 134.

5 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 88.

6 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

7 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 114.

8 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 112.

9 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 113.

They blindly accepted all the figures of the armed forces of the bourgeoisie, carefully supplemented them with the forces of the Reichswehr and police, and then rounded them up to half a million and more. In this way, they ended up with a compact force, armed to the teeth, and quite sufficient to paralyse their own forces. Without doubt, the forces of the German counter-revolution were considerable, and in any event better organised and trained than our own Kornilovites and semi-Kornilovites. But so were the effective forces of the German revolution. The proletariat formed the overwhelming majority of the population of Germany. In our own case, the insurrection was decided by Petrograd and Moscow, at least initially. In Germany, the insurrection would immediately have had dozens of powerful proletarian hotbeds. Against this backdrop, the armed forces of the enemy would have looked by no means as terrible as the rounded-up statistics suggested.

Uroki Oktiabria, p. xL¹⁰

This is the only place where comrade Trotsky mentioned any difference between the objective premises of the Russian and Germany Octobers. As he describes it, the conditions for a seizure of power in Germany in 1923 were every bit as favourable as those in Russia in 1917: 'it is impossible to imagine more mature, prepared conditions for a seizure of power'.¹¹ He does not make the slightest mention or give the reader the slightest indication of the existence of any reasons, however insignificant, for a retreat during the 'German October'. No, no, in his opinion, the insurrection was the unconditional duty of the party at that moment. Unfortunately however in the German October the opponents of the insurrection were in a position to 'drag the party backwards'.¹²

Thus (according to comrade Trotsky's description) the German revolution failed. After this failure, the guilty parties of course came out with their own 'tendentious calculations' 'as a way of justifying that policy that led to that defeat'.¹³ And comrade Trotsky adds: 'It is not hard to imagine how history would have been written if the political course of refusing to fight had prevailed in the Central Committee (of the Russian Bolshevik Party). The officious his-

¹⁰ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 113.

¹¹ The sentiment, although not the direct quotation, can be found in 'Tov. Trotskii o germanskoi revoliutsii. Doklad na gubernskom s'ezde metallistov', *Pravda*, no. 239, 21 October 1923, p. 2.

¹² Trotsky, Document 1, p. 135.

¹³ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 113.

torians would of course have portrayed the insurrection in October 1917 as the purest madness' (p. XLI).¹⁴

With the power of his dramatic art, comrade Trotsky's history of the Russian October conjures up the image of the person chiefly guilty of the German defeat. It is true that comrade Trotsky does not name him directly but he is easily distinguishable from the others. It is immediately apparent from all of his features that he is not a German – the unnamed, guilty Germans appear only in secondary roles. The chief of the accused is clearly responsible for the Germans in general appearing in the dock.

– Why did he not appoint better people to the CC of the German party? Why did he not exert proper pressure on the leading personnel in Germany? After all, this was his first order of business ...

– Or should anything else have been expected of him after his 'October experience'? What more could be expected of him in the future? Only the worst. The stern accuser, with the gloomiest of expressions, cries out:

'Last year's German lesson is not just a serious reminder, it is also a grave warning' (p. XIII).¹⁵

After this preparatory warning, the confused reader asks himself the vital question:

– Who will help us in such a situation?

This high accuser does not give a direct answer. He is deep in thought and says as if only to himself:

'Not every party will have its own Lenin in similar circumstances' (p. XLI).¹⁶

– And their own **Trotsky!** – comes the exclamation from the reader.

Here the gaze of the gloomy accuser becomes clear.

He immediately sits up and raises his own voice:

Much has been said and written lately about the need to 'bolshevisé' the Comintern ... What does the bolshevisation of Communist parties mean? It means educating them in their selection of leadership personnel so that they will not drift along on the current when the time comes for their own October. 'That's Hegel's philosophy in short, That's the deepest wisdom books bestow!'

p. LXIV¹⁷

14 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 114.

15 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 88.

16 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 114.

17 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 136.

That is how comrade Trotsky speaks in September 1924.

Two Different Roles

In January 1924, comrade Trotsky spoke differently.

At that time, the Executive Committee of the Comintern, with the participation of leading German comrades from all three tendencies, had taken political stock of the ill-fated October events. It is true that comrade Trotsky did not take part in these meetings, but comrade Radek introduced theses which were drafted, according to his official declaration, by 'comrades Trotsky, Piatakov and me (Radek)'.¹⁸ This draft of the theses by the Rightist minority was rejected by the Executive Committee of the Comintern, and has not been published to this day. These theses say, among other things:

The Executive Committee decisively rejects the demand by the leaders of the Berlin organisation to regard the October retreat by the party to be in no way justified and even treasonous. If the party had proclaimed the insurrection in October, as proposed by the Berlin comrades, it would be lying with its neck broken. The party committed grave errors in the course of its retreat, errors which are the subject of our present criticism. But the actual decision to retreat corresponded to the state of affairs and is approved by the Executive Committee.¹⁹

And so: in January of this year, comrade Trotsky seriously believed that the retreat during the German October was appropriate and corresponded to the state of affairs. The leaders of the Berlin organisation 'regard the October retreat by the party to be in no way justified and even treasonous',²⁰ but comrade Trotsky 'decisively' came out against this view of the matter. He (together with Radek, Piatakov and the chairman of the CC of the German party, [Heinrich] Brandler) demanded that the Executive Committee approve the retreat.

What should we make of this?

18 *Die Lehren* 1924, p. 23. In a letter to the Italian Communist Amadeo Bordiga in March 1926, Trotsky admits that he gave his support to Radek's June theses by phone but adds that he did not take part in drawing up the theses because of illness ('Correspondance [sic] between Bordiga and Trotsky' 2004).

19 I have been unable to locate the source of this quotation. It is not in the excerpts from the draft printed in Baylerlein 2003, pp. 403–6.

20 I have been unable to locate the source of this quotation.

To understand this, the reader must know that in October 1923 the 'political course of refusing to fight', proposed by the right wing of the German Communist Party, prevailed in the CC of the party with the direct support of comrade Radek. In all of the essentials, comrade Trotsky has always been in agreement with the right wing of the KPD (Brandler et al); so it was again in January, after the defeat.

'The experience of the European struggles, and especially the German struggles of recent years, viewed in light of our own experience, tells us that there are two types of leader who are inclined to drag the party backwards at the very moment when it should be taking a giant leap forward' (p. LXIV).²¹

Comrade Trotsky wrote this in September in his *The Lessons of October*. He stigmatised these 'types' most thoroughly, and went on to declare: 'But, at the decisive moment, they will both join hands – to stand against the insurrection' (p. LXIV).²²

In October 1923 in Germany, this was precisely the case. But three months later, in January, comrade Trotsky expressed the opinion that these 'types' had acted perfectly correctly in Germany – that they had acted appropriately – and that this had been in keeping with the state of affairs, so the party had to make this retreat. An insurrection would have been the purest madness, and the party would only have broken its neck in the act ...

The accused 'types' of course submitted their own 'tendentious calculations' to the Executive Committee in January 'in order to justify the policy that led to that defeat'. The Executive Committee rejected these calculations strongly enough, but comrade Trotsky defended them.

Such was his lack of 'boldness' just three months after the German October.

In spite of 'The Lessons of October'! ...

And in spite of the fundamental lesson of all the revolutions of the world: 'will not drift along on the current when the time comes for their own October'.²³

He himself declared to the world the 'classic demonstration of ...',²⁴ etc., etc.

This was in January of this year. Then comrade Trotsky resolutely took on the role of the 'opponent of the insurrection', his, so to speak, classic role.

By September of the same year, as we already know, he assumed a completely different role.

21 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 135.

22 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 135.

23 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 136.

24 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

In this latest scenario, we do not find the slightest trace of the January 'type'. Here everything is a witness to heroism: not a single trace can be found of his own allegedly 'classic' role. There is not a single word of justification for the retreat.

No, now he calls for insurrection and condemns its opponents:

And the most acute change occurs when the party of the proletariat moves from preparation, propaganda, organisation and agitation to a direct struggle for power, to armed insurrection against the bourgeoisie. Everything in the party that remains indecisive, sceptical, conciliatory, capitulatory – Menshevik – opposes the insurrection, looks for theories to justify its opposition, and finds them ready-made in yesterday's opportunistic opponents.

p. xvi²⁵

And so: down with the opportunists! Down with the heroes of capitulation! Down with Brandler and those who think like him!

And again and again, hurrah for insurrection!

– But, someone in the audience might ask *sotte voce* – what about that broken neck?

– What, is there cowardice in this question?! Clearly, you must absolutely be taught how not to drift along on the current! The neck? I will ask you, the faint-hearted: what is your neck worth? I have already been listening for a long time to your little song about the danger of breaking your neck. You droned on about this when I was fighting at Brest-Litovsk against the German General Staff. And did I not demonstrate to you at that time my own readiness to put the neck of the revolution on the line?

It is true! But then comrade Lenin with his enormous energy came out against any further continuation of the adventure. And thanks to this, the neck of the proletarian revolution remained unbroken.

Comrade Lenin at that time urged in a fatherly, humorous way that the newspaper of the then 'left' communists should be called '*Szlachcic*', 'because it looks at things from the point of view of the *szlachcic* [a Polish nobleman] who, dying in a beautiful pose, sword in hand, said: "Peace is disgraceful, war is honourable"'.²⁶

Thus, using comrade Lenin's expression, we can call comrade Trotsky's September role the role of the *szlachcic*.

25 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 90.

26 Lenin 1965e, p. 105.

Which of these two depictions of the German October corresponds to the actual state of affairs?

I would suggest neither of them does. Both are wrong.

A Timely Evaluation of the Moment

In an article written by comrade Trotsky in May (*Vostok i Zapad*, p. 69), and mentioned by him in *The Lessons of October*,²⁷ he states that 'several comrades' (he really means comrade Zinoviev) declared after the German defeat: 'We overestimated the situation, the revolution had not yet matured'. Comrade Trotsky is being ironic about the 'we' here ('we' means Zinoviev) and declares: 'Our mistake was not in our overestimation of the conditions for revolution but in "our" underestimation of them, in our inability to grasp in good time the need for a sudden and bold tactical change: from the struggle for the masses to the struggle for power'. How did things turn out in reality? Did comrade Zinoviev really 'underestimate' the conditions for revolution and 'was he unable to understand quickly enough the need for a sudden and bold tactical change'?²⁸

What do the facts say?

Comrades Trotsky and Radek even acknowledged the following in their theses in January 1924:

From the very beginning the Comintern and the KPD saw the Ruhr struggle as a period of revolutionary development in Germany ... The call by the Leipzig Party Congress of the KPD, the decrees by the Frankfurt Conference, the resolutions of the spring meeting of the delegation of the KPD with the Comintern show that the KPD, like the Comintern, understood that the German proletariat was at a turning-point, that after the party, having pursued the tactic of a common front and having carried out much work among the Social-Democratic masses and the non-party workers, had gathered around itself the broad proletarian masses, – it was confronted with the task not only of winning over the overwhelming majority of the proletariat, but also of leading it into battle as a revolutionary party which had set itself the concrete task of establishing a political dictat-

27 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

28 Trotskii 1924f, p. 69.

as the only way out of the situation in which the German people found itself.²⁹

This describes the position of the Executive Committee completely correctly. But this position above all corresponded to comrade Zinoviev's proposals (and did not once diverge from his opinion). As far as the position of the German party is concerned, comrades Radek and Trotsky are embellishing it considerably: the majority of the CC at that time (in the winter and spring of 1923) had only a very dim idea of the concrete revolutionary tasks facing the party.

Several proposals of the Left Opposition were far more clear but the party rejected them.

If comrade Trotsky had remained true to the facts, he would have had to say something like the following: as far as the Executive Committee and the Left Opposition of the KPD are concerned, they should least of all be reproached for not grasping the need for a sharp change in tactics because they in fact did grasp it in good time and exerted pressure on the KPD.

– Perhaps, comrade Trotsky might reply, – but the pressure exerted at that time by the Executive Committee on the German party was not 'sufficient'. This reproach was in fact contained in the January theses of comrades Trotsky and Radek. But they should have made this reproach early enough – by the spring or summer of 1923. If they had done so, the Executive Committee would perhaps have listened to their advice and increased the pressure. In January 1924, i.e. three months after October, this wise revelation was very cheap and completely useless.

More serious was another point in comrade Radek's and Trotsky's January theses which was criticised by the Executive Committee. They said that at a session of the Enlarged Plenum (in the middle of June 1923) questions about the Ruhr struggle were being discussed 'much more from the propaganda perspective than from the perspective of the organisation of an immediate struggle'.³⁰

The task of organising an immediate struggle with the aim of seizing power had not yet been concretely formulated by July. That is true. The 'October course' was not adopted by the Executive Committee until August, two months later. In June, the situation in Germany was still such that no sensible person at that time could envisage the organisation of an armed insurrection as the most immediate task. Before such an important decision could be taken, some

29 *Deutscher Oktober* 2003, pp. 404–5.

30 The sentiment, if not the direct quotation, can be found in Baylerlein 2003, pp. 405–6.

quite minor signs had to be present which heralded the rise of a powerful wave of revolution. In June, no such signs were yet visible.

At the start of August, a sharp change occurred in Germany. The general situation became revolutionary. Evidence of this was the broad mass movement which led to the fall of the Cuno government. If the KPD had foreseen this movement, it should have boldly taken action in July in order to seize the initiative and lead the movement. Indeed, the German CC issued a bold proclamation on 12 July calling for a street demonstration on Anti-Fascist Day (29 July). The government banned the demonstration. The Left Opposition in the party demanded that the streets be taken. Everyone was waiting for the CC's decision.

At this time, comrades Zinoviev and Bukharin, and also comrade Trotsky, were in the Caucasus. The first two told us during the discussion on this subject that they were in favour of the aforementioned street demonstration. Comrade Radek and I, who were in Moscow, were against it, as it seemed to us to be taking a senseless risk. Comrade Radek, as is well-known, often exhibits an acute sensitivity towards any changes in the political atmosphere, but this time did not feel the approach of anything momentous (nor did I), and, therefore, we could not see any reason for the KPD to take any risky action. This was a mistake on our part. Comrades Zinoviev and Bukharin expressed their opinion in the following words:

'Only by such methods as the appeal of 12 July can the KPD become in the eyes of all the workers the generally recognised champion and the unifying centre for the entire proletariat in the struggle against fascism. Without this, the sad experience of Italy and Bulgaria will be repeated. The German CC has more than enough elements arguing for delay and displaying their reasonableness and caution'.³¹

Radek replied that he believed this effort to force the struggle in Germany to be a 'race towards defeat in July for fear of repeating what happened in Bulgaria',³² and came out most resolutely against it. Comrade Trotsky though informed us that he had no opinion on the matter as he was not well-enough informed.

Both points of view of members of the Executive Committee were communicated to the CC of the German Party. Comrade Brandler in Berlin, by all appearances, acted completely independently of both opinions; in other words,

31 I am unable to locate the source of this exact quotation. The sentiments in this letter are however repeated in a letter from Zinoviev and Bukharin to Brandler in July 1923 (see *Deutscher Oktober* 2003, pp. 95–7).

32 I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

he probably did not take the idea of a street demonstration seriously for a moment.

Immediately after this, the broad mass movement began. Under its pressure, the Cuno government resigned on 12 August. Comrade Zinoviev, still in the Caucasus, learned about this movement from sketchy reports from the Russian Telegraph Agency (ROST) and came to the conclusion that a mighty revolutionary wave was rising.

He raised the alarm.

By 15 August, his most important theses were ready: 'The Situation in Germany and our Tasks'. He has scarcely written anything better than this. A red thread runs through them like a clear October path.

After we received these theses from Zinoviev in the Caucasus, Radek and I realised that in Germany the revolution was knocking at the door. That is a fact.

The theses, by the way, read:

'The crisis is maturing. Decisive events are approaching. A new decisive chapter is starting in the activity of the German Communist Party, and therefore in the entire Comintern. The German Communist Party must orientate itself quickly and decisively in light of the imminent, decisive, revolutionary crisis'.³³

'The crisis is maturing. The stakes are huge. The moment is approaching when we shall need to show courage, courage, and again courage'.³⁴

At almost the same time as we received these theses, comrades Zinoviev and Bukharin arrived in Moscow. Comrade Trotsky also returned. Zinoviev's theses were acknowledged to be correct and were accepted by the Executive Committee. The representatives of the German CC were immediately invited to Moscow. But the CC replied that they 'could not yet' come. The stout-hearted German comrades (not the Left, they were no longer 'stout-hearted' by then), were in the thick of an incipient revolutionary movement, but they still had no idea at all of its significance and seriousness.

33 G. Zinov'ev, 'Die Lage in Deutschland und Unsere Aufgaben', RGASPI [Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Sovremennoi Politicheskoi Istorii] f. 495, op. 293, d. 295, l. 7. This location no longer refers to the current RGASPI holdings structure, probably because of the re-organisation of Comintern holdings in the mid-1990s. My sincere thanks to Gelb Albert for pointing this out, and to him and Bernhard Bayerlein for making this document available to me. An extract of Zinoviev's document is available (*Deutscher Oktober* 2003, pp. 103–4).

34 G. Zinov'ev, 'Die Lage in Deutschland und Unsere Aufgaben', RGASPI, f. 495, op. 293, d. 295, l. 26. Cf. n. 29.

This is the best proof of comrade Zinoviev's sharpness in grasping the significance of the German movement. But comrade Trotsky appears to have forgotten about this very 'timely' evaluation of the situation.

In the September Commission

Comrade Zinoviev defended his position for three whole weeks. The representatives of the CC of the KPD did not appear in Moscow until the middle of September. They had no choice but to acknowledge that the recent course of events had completely confirmed the diagnosis and revolutionary prognosis laid out by Zinoviev a month earlier, even though they themselves, they said, had not grasped this immediately.

Comrade Brandler even succumbed to revolutionary fantasy. The seizure of power seemed to him now to be a simple and certain matter. He severely overestimated the battle readiness and the military preparedness of the KPD and thereby made it harder for the Executive Committee to formulate a correct idea of the immediate difficulties and demands of the German movement.

At the September Commission of the Comintern, comrade Trotsky agreed with comrade Zinoviev and other comrades about the general evaluation of the situation. And yet on the question of the slogan of the Soviets of Workers' Deputies, a serious disagreement arose between them. Comrade Zinoviev and another comrade considered it necessary for the KPD not to restrict itself to one propaganda idea for the Soviets, but to set about creating Soviets first and foremost in those regions where conditions were most favourable for them.

Comrades Trotsky and Brandler protested energetically against this. As the other German comrades shared their opinion, comrade Zinoviev and others did not think it feasible to insist that their proposals be accepted come what may. The final decision on this question was thus unanimously accepted by the Commission.

I do not think that this decision turned out to be the correct one. I believe that the most important slogan for mobilising and organising the forces of the revolution was buried by that decision. In his *The Lessons of October*, comrade Trotsky tries to defend his decision. His motivation seems inadequate to me, but I do not think there is any point focussing on this sticky question in the context of this article, because this would sidetrack us too much. After all, the decision was based on comrade Trotsky's opinion, not on comrade Zinoviev's. Anyone can see from comrade Zinoviev's articles at that time that he faithfully submitted to the decision and wrote his articles in that spirit. And that is why no reasonable person can maintain that comrade Zinoviev's proposal could in any

way have contributed to the defeat of the German revolution. That is enough of that now.

The following words of comrade Trotsky level a very strange and unfounded accusation at comrade Zinoviev:

'Our error lies in the fact that for many weeks "we" kept repeating the old platitudes that the "revolution cannot be fixed to a date", thereby missing every opportunity' (*Vostok i zapad*, p. 59).³⁵

How could he come up with something like this? Where was the question discussed 'for many weeks'?

The Commission did not waste a single day discussing whether a particular time could be fixed for the revolution or not. It is true that, while more important questions were being discussed, something like that was touched upon in passing. Comrade Trotsky's unilateral inclination to carry out the revolution strictly according to a calendar appeared to all those comrades present to be a narrowly organisational and rather un-Marxist approach to the matter.³⁶ It is very possible that some comrade expressed this out loud. But it seemed rather pointless to fundamentally rouse and stir up the stout-hearted German comrades by means of such an admittedly highly unilateral emphasis on the organisational technical tasks. This is why the Commission did not push comrade Trotsky's private calendrical theory on anyone.

I repeat that not a single day was wasted arguing about this question. Consequently, this 'by means of' was the reason why opportunities were missed.

Serious disagreements arose in the Commission about the 'selection of leading personnel'. Not that comrade Trotsky wanted to remove any of the opportunist members from the CC. No, he had nothing to say against those members of the CC who retreated from the fight later on in October. On the contrary, he wanted to remove one of the leaders of the left wing, comrade Ruth Fischer, from the CC of the KPD. He suggested that the Executive Committee keep her in Moscow so that she would not be able to 'interfere with' the revolutionary work of the Brandler Central Committee.

Comrade Zinoviev was firmly against this proposal from comrade Trotsky, and after much work he finally managed to obtain a narrow majority in the Commission for the rejection of this proposal.

I can no longer remember which of the two proposals I endorsed. It is very possible that I voted for comrade Trotsky's proposal. In any event, at that time

35 Trotsky 1924f, p. 69.

36 Although not the direct source of this quotation, an article written in January 1924 by Trotsky discussed the timing of a revolution, see Trotsky 1946, pp. 252–4.

I still considered comrade Brandler to be a steadfast revolutionary. I personally have no right therefore to reproach other comrades for making mistakes about the selection of members of the German CC. But as comrade Trotsky claims to be a mentor of the Executive Committee on the issue of the 'selection of leading "personnel"' without saying one word about his own errors, I must state that no, comrade Trotsky has not set us a very good example in this regard.

Comrade Trotsky exaggerates somewhat the significance of the selection of the members of the Central Committees. But in spite of this exaggeration, we would be able to agree when he says of the German CC: 'To ignore such lessons (the lessons from last year. O.V.K.), not to draw the necessary conclusion about the selection of people – is to invite inevitable defeats' (p. LXIII).³⁷ We ask you however not to lose sight of the really instructive episode regarding Ruth Fischer in the September Commission.

No disagreements arose in the Commission on the other practical questions, many of them very important.

The fraternal parties of the most important neighbouring countries were mobilised by the Executive Committee and, as much as possible, prepared for the future prospects of a German revolution.

The German October, in Reality

Events in Germany turned out differently than we desired. The revolutionary proletariat suffered a severe defeat. This defeat was caused in part by objective difficulties, and in part by the poor leadership of the party.

It cannot be said that the evaluation of the situation provided by the Executive Committee in August and September was essentially wrong. Nothing of the kind! There was actually a real possibility of victory. It is true that this possibility was somewhat overestimated (in September, although not in August). The surge in the spontaneous mass movement ebbed earlier than we had anticipated. Social Democracy turned out to be in some respects a stronger bulwark of capitalism than we had expected from the words of our German comrades. The representatives of the KPD in the German Commission overestimated their own forces.

Of course, what comrade Trotsky wrote in *West and East* (p. 129) is a fantastic exaggeration: 'With regard to all the preconditions of the revolution, we were

37 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 134.

in the most favourable position imaginable'.³⁸ No, in September the situation did not present itself as so exaggeratedly favourable. Comrade Trotsky, in his victorious self-confidence, ignores the greatest differences in the objective preconditions of the German Revolution of 1923 and those of the Russian Revolution of 1917, and the extent to which they were more favourable for the victory of the Russian Revolution, such as the existence of a multimillion man army, the overwhelming majority of which in the autumn of 1917 were in favour of the proletarian revolution. Nothing like that existed in Germany in 1923, and comrade Trotsky completely ignores such trivialities when he writes his history.

Still, the general situation in Germany was not unfavourable. The situation was such that comrade Zinoviev was quite right to say at the Fifth World Congress, once the whole picture of the events had become clear:

'If the revolutionary situation which occurred in October 1923 is destined to be repeated, we will again insist on open acknowledgement of the fact that revolution is knocking at the door ... I repeat: should a similar situation arise again, we shall look over the figures, better estimate our forces, but this time we will stake everything on the revolutionary card'.³⁹

The real chance of securing victory in October was not seized by the Germany party. The party readied itself for battle, but did not take up the battle. This was deeply disappointing to us.

The Brandler CC is chiefly to blame for this. Brandler asserted that the incredible difficulties made retreat inevitable. As we saw, comrade Trotsky agreed with this assertion in January. And a number of other comrades, including comrade Zinoviev (and also the author of these lines), were initially of the same opinion in November and December, having relied on information received mainly through Radek and the CC of the German party. This view was partly shaken during the January conference thanks to new information from the Left. In its resolution the Executive Committee was unable to say with hand on heart whether the retreat was really inevitable or not. It rejected the demand of the Right (Radek, Trotsky, Brandler and others) to 'approve' the retreat.

But this or that solution of this historical problem at that time was no longer of any real political significance. After all, the leadership of the party in October, whatever the response to this question, deserved the harshest criticism. The need for the retreat, if such a need existed, cannot be used to justify the utter bankruptcy of the CC of the RKP.

38 Trotsky 1924f, p. 129.

39 'Piatyi Vsemirnyi Kongress Komintern. Otchet o deiatel'nosti Ispolkoma Komintern. Doklad tov. Zinov'eva', *Pravda*, no. 140, 24 June 1924, p. 3.

In class war, as in all war, the conditions of the struggle determine the forms and aims of the strategy; and the attack, and in the event the retreat, are determined by the conditions of the struggle. But whatever those conditions, even the most unfavourable ones, the conditions of the struggle cannot be used in a revolution to justify passivity. Capitulation is not a mode of struggle. It is a renunciation of the fight.

At the Fifth World Congress, comrade Zinoviev said, among other things:

'We are not reproaching Brandler for not winning. No, we know that it is sometimes necessary to suffer defeats in the struggle. We are reproaching him for something else. We are not asking him why did you not win, we are asking him why did you not fight, why did you not do everything you could to win?'⁴⁰

The German CC did not fight; it gave up without a fight. To put it bluntly, he conducted himself no better than the leaders of 'Left' Social Democracy who also promised to fight in that situation, but never joined the battle.

Basically, the actions of Brandler and others were not of course based on conscious, i.e. treacherous, reasoning. No. If what comrade Trotsky is saying now (about the apparently excellent preconditions for victory and about the absolute impermissibility of retreat) is correct, then this would mean that Brandler and everyone who followed him were traitors. But in fact this is not the case. They are indisputably communists, but communists who have committed a whole range of opportunistic errors. They intended to fight, but then (to use comrade Trotsky's favourite expression) 'they drift along on the current'.⁴¹ In Saxony, they played at being ministers, instead of taking the masses into the streets. They 'prepared themselves' for revolution but did nothing to develop revolutionary forces among the masses. On the contrary they issued a direct order to suspend all mass actions 'until the decisive battle'. This directive was carried out perfectly everywhere (with the exception of Hamburg). And *nothing more*.

Furthermore, comrade Zinoviev's fears and warnings last summer about a repetition of the Bulgarian events in Germany were confirmed. In his August

40 I am unable to locate this exact quotation, although Radek appears to refer to it in his speech at the Congress when he says about the events in Saxony: 'Comrade Zinov'ev is not accusing the Communist Party of not deciding to fight to seize power in October because the masses were split at that time, but he points out that, on joining the government, it should in any event have demanded the arming of the proletariat, the nationalisation of industry, and if the Social Democrats refused to join in the struggle, it should have split with them and left the government' ('Piatyi Vsemirnyi Kongress Komintern. Otchet o deiatel'nosti Ispolkoma Komintern. Rech' tov. Radeka', *Pravda*, no. 140, 24 June 1924, p. 5).

41 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 136.

theses he even explicitly warned against precisely the mistake that had been so fateful in October: 'It is impossible to keep the powder dry', he wrote at that time, 'until the decisive battle ... It would be doctrinaire in theory and a huge political mistake in practice to put off any action until the decisive battle'.⁴²

This, by the way, was the instruction given by comrade Zinoviev from the very start.

But the German CC acted to the contrary, and it committed precisely that 'huge political mistake' which the Executive Committee had warned against so unequivocally and insistently.

When the Left Hand Does not Know What the Right Hand is Doing

Obviously, after such a difficult experience, the composition of the CC of the KPD changed radically. In January, the Executive Committee undertook an energetic renewal of itself. The right wing was removed.

Later, in May, comrade Trotsky wrote: 'It is appropriate that the German Communist Party has radically renewed its leading organs'.⁴³ We take note of this late recognition. But it would have been better if comrade Trotsky had already supported this reform in January. At that time he was against it. The aforementioned draft of theses by comrades Trotsky and Radek state that the 'demand for the removal of the CC', signifies a 'panic which threatens the very existence of the party'.⁴⁴

And so, comrade Trotsky supported the German right wing to the last moment, while the Executive Committee, and above all comrade Zinoviev, fought against it. We saw an example of this in the September Commission in the Ruth Fischer case. And that is how he behaved in general.

And yet from his *The Lessons of October*, the reader will get the opposite impression. This, for example, is what he writes about the importance of the selection of the 'leadership personnel':

'The experience of the abortive German October is appalling proof of this. This selection must take place from the viewpoint of *revolutionary action*.

42 The two quotations separated here by ellipses are not in this sequence in the original (see G. Zinov'ev, 'Die Lage in Deutschland und Unsere Aufgaben', RGASPI, f. 495, op. 293, d. 295, l. 14).

43 The sentiment, although not the direct quotation, can be found in 'Tov. Trotskii o germanskoi revoliutsii. Doklad na gubernskom s'ezde metallistov', *Pravda*, no. 239, 21 October 1923, p. 2.

44 See footnote 18.

During these years, Germany has provided ample examples of leading party members being put to the test at moments of direct struggle' (p. LXIII).⁴⁵

This is true, and it is precisely for this reason that the Rightist leaders (Levi, Friesland, Geyer, and others) have been frequently removed from the German CC, and subsequently turned out to be renegades. On the other hand, the Executive Committee has frequently supplemented the CC of the party with representatives from the Left. But neither the one nor the other happened at the initiative of comrade Trotsky. The initiative usually came from comrade Zinoviev and was often resisted by comrade Trotsky.

This was no accident. It is true that discussion of the Russian debate in the sections of the Comintern revealed only a few supporters of comrade Trotsky's position, and they generally came from the extreme right wing of the party. Nor can that be regarded as purely accidental.

There is no need here to dwell specifically on the Russian questions, or on the international questions which have now receded somewhat into the past. It is worth devoting some attention to the prospects of the international situation as outlined by comrade Trotsky. Despite all the facts that demonstrate the opposite, he still insists on a continuing 'era' (not lasting forever, of course, but lasting for quite a long time) of pacifism and democracy. This shows the strength of his attraction to the rightist trend. This is quite like the influence of a magnetic anomaly which stubbornly points the arrow of the compass in a 'new direction'.

But this is not the whole truth; it is, so to speak, only one side of the coin. No one can understand Trotsky if they see in him only an ordinary, run-of-the-mill opportunist.

Comrade Trotsky is not a one-handed man: he has a shield arm and a sword arm. We have already seen him in both roles as he described the 'German October': in the 'classic' role and in the 'noble' [*shliakhtich*] role.

And this is not the exception but the rule with comrade Trotsky. In his politics he always represents, so to speak, two different 'types'. One is with the rightist trend, the other with the leftist. The superficial observer might get the impression that he is constantly vacillating from one to the other, his own kind of 'permanent revolution'. But this only appears to be the case. Comrade Trotsky does not vacillate. He usually adopts a definite, but wrong, course.

The reality is this: in his actions he tends towards the right, but he describes these actions in leftist, very leftist, terms. The rightist type is the man of action who says little, does not publicise it much, and gets on with his work. The leftist

45 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 134.

type is susceptible to public speeches, talks a lot, does not do much work, but ... describes it. *But the descriptions given by the leftist type differ completely from the work actually done by the rightist type.* As the Bible says: the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing.

This only seems complicated at first glance. In reality it can be easily explained: something similar – on a smaller scale – is often observed in nature. Let's imagine, for example, a very large compass. Let's attach a small flag or a banner to the broad (Southern) end of the magnetic needle. Wherever the earth's magnetic pull is especially strong (a magnetic anomaly), we can observe the following phenomenon: the sharper end of the magnetic needle deviates from the correct direction to one side, but the banner deviates to the opposite side simultaneously and to the same degree. As soon as the sharper end deviates to the right, the banner deviates equally to the left. If we set our course either according to the direction of the sharp end of the magnetic needle or according to the direction in which the banner points, then we will lose our bearings either way. That is why it was always important for the experienced maritime navigator to carefully take into account the coefficient of deviation of the magnetic needle and to correct for the error in order to steer a correct course. It is even more important in politics.

Comrade Trotsky is not simply an ordinary opportunist. He possesses a fine aesthetic sense. He senses the aesthetic inadequacy of the external forms of opportunist politics; the external forms of politics are more to his taste the more leftist they are. This is all well and good in art, and the Bible even praises this as virtuous, but in politics any contradiction between form and content, between representation and reality, between theory and practice can only be harmful.

This is most clearly in evidence if we look at the case of Germany. In his *The Lessons of October*, comrade Trotsky states that 'nobody else has even attempted any other explanation'⁴⁶ of the German events of last year than the argument outlined by him in his article in May and his speech in June of that year.

Excuse me, but that is wrong. The Executive Committee of the Comintern tried to do this. The German Party tried as well. A whole series of articles was published. This led to a pile of speeches and resolutions in various countries. The Executive Committee of the Comintern even issued a special pamphlet on this – *The Lessons of the German Events*.⁴⁷

46 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

47 *Die Lehren* 1924.

What a pity that comrade Trotsky did not take the trouble to acquaint himself with at least some of these works and with the ample factual material accumulated in them before he began to come up with his own schema. That is why he represents the matter in such a startlingly distorted way. By May he had already forgotten what had happened last year (and even in January 1924). Apparently, under the fresh impression created by the parliamentary election results which were relatively favourable to the KPD, the situation from last year began to seem to him superior, brilliant. And he let his imagination run wild.

This could have produced an inoffensive work of art which would even have had a certain propagandistic effect, had it not dripped with malice. It was precisely this tendency which forced me to destroy this crafty edifice. I value highly comrade Trotsky's art and creative energy – there have been few people of similar energy in history. I mean, of course, art in the broadest sense of the word. The art of armed insurrection, among other things, is his speciality. Recently, for example, in deepening this art, he displayed valuable, extremely important initiative for all communist parties.

But he is no master of the tactical and strategic calculus of Leninism. Here it is the CC of the RKP which is firmly in the saddle, not Trotsky. He often looks at the situation with surprising one-sidedness. In politics, for example, he frequently allows himself to be led astray from the straight path by personal sympathies and antipathies, something which never happened with Lenin and should not happen with a leader of Lenin's party.

In this case then, comrade Trotsky allowed himself to be led astray by the monstrous attempt to destroy the chairman of the Comintern, having used the October defeat as the pretext for this.

This is the malicious side of his interpretation of history. True, he maintains that he possesses no such side, but it is perfectly obvious to everyone. This does not look particularly 'aesthetic'. Trotsky himself says: 'it would be too pathetic'.⁴⁸ Yes, it is pathetic and wrong.

He should have rejected this tendency.

After all, this tendency does not only have a personal edge, it is also a politically harmful turn towards the Right. In attacking comrade Zinoviev, he is indirectly castigating the leadership of the Communist International and the political line of its Executive Committee.

This flank attack is doomed to total failure. For the line of the Executive Committee was and remains correct. Comrade Trotsky's course is such that it gives him no right at all to claim the role of infallible arbiter.

This has been clearly shown.

48 Not a direct quotation, cf. Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 86–7.

Two Words about the Civil War in Finland

In conclusion, a few observations about the Finnish example. This is what comrade Trotsky writes in his introduction:

'In 1917 we saw this in the case of Finland; there, the revolutionary movement developed in exceptionally favourable conditions, under the aegis and the direct, military support of revolutionary Russia. But most of the leaders in the Finnish party turned out to be Social Democrats, and they ruined the revolution' (p. LX).⁴⁹

In part – only in part – this is incorrect.

In 1917, during the general strike in November, we actually did let slip a favourable revolutionary situation, firstly because we were SDs at the time, and secondly because we had almost no weapons. It is not true that our revolutionary movement at that time had the protection and direct military support of revolutionary Russia. Our general strike played out at exactly the same time as the street fighting in Moscow for the seizure of power. At that time, Red Petrograd was not in a position to give us any support. As far as the Russian garrison and fleet stationed in Finland, it is true that a significant part of them (although not all) was amicably disposed towards us, but they were so sick of war that we could not count on their active support – especially in a foreign country.

'You drifted along on the current', comrade Trotsky might say, and we would not dispute this. By the way, we had already said this ourselves in 1918, having severely criticised ourselves.

But we learnt something at that time, and quite quickly; two months later we took up the fight (in January 1918). This time, revolutionary Russia did give us protection and direct military support. But in March the Germans attacked in support of the White Guards in Finland, and this decided the fate of the struggle: our workers' front was not able to hold out against regular German troops.

This was the main cause of our defeat. The second cause was undoubtedly that we ourselves did not fight as well as we might have. At that time, we were not yet Communists but Social Democrats, and we were almost completely lacking in Bolshevik experience. But whether poorly or well, at least our party fought at that time.

This is why our German comrades should not consider it self-praise on our part if I blamed them for capitulating without a fight six years after the

49 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 131.

Russian Revolution and after four and half years of Bolshevik leadership of the Comintern.

We Finnish Communists have no cause to praise ourselves; but we also have no reason to fear the powder and smoke from 'October'.

I forgot to mention a third cause of the defeat of our revolution in 1918: this was the well-known, theatrical gesture by comrade Trotsky during the first peace negotiations with the representatives of the German government at Brest-Litovsk (in January and February). The peace conditions proposed at that time by the German government were much more favourable to both Soviet Russia and to our Finnish workers' government than the conditions which were dictated later. On the eve of comrade Trotsky's final visit to Brest-Litovsk (at the end of January), comrade Lenin told him that when the Germans presented their ultimatum he should immediately sign the peace treaty. And comrade Zinoviev, as comrade Trotsky himself reports, said that 'with any further delay, we will only worsen the peace conditions, and it must be signed at once' (*Protokoly VII s'ezda RKP*, p. 79).⁵⁰

Had peace been concluded between Soviet Russia and Germany at that time, the German government would probably not have sent its troops to Finland. We base this conclusion on a series of memoirs published by German military commanders after the war.

But comrade Trotsky rejected (10 February) the peace conditions offered by the Germans. A valuable month was lost concluding the peace treaty, and in the course of that month Soviet Russia gave up Reval and other cities to the Germans, while German forces struck at our rear in Finland.

Oh, if only Lenin had been able to exert the appropriate pressure at the time!

50 Sed'moi ekstrennyi s'ezd 1962, p. 66.

‘On the Lessons of Trotskyism (L. Trotsky’s Book *Lenin*)’¹

V. Molotov

L. Trotsky’s book *Lenin* is subtitled ‘notes for a biographer’.² Yet the main material in this book is not for the biographer. In any event, it is not only ‘for the biographer’ that comrade Trotsky concentrates here on the most important moments in the development of the party and, in particular, on its leader. It is not only for the biographer that individual moments are described from the preparation for October, episodes from the era of the insurrection and the first steps of the Soviet government. And, finally, it is not only for the biographer that comrade Trotsky touches, as if in passing, on the most serious issues, such as our campaign against Warsaw in 1920, or compares the conditions of the October insurrection with the recent events in Germany in autumn 1923 which we all remember. No, all of this is not only and not so much for the ‘biographer’ as for our party and for the other parties of the Communist International.

The author of the book *Lenin* notes that ‘this book is not complete’, that he hopes ‘to continue this work, to improve on it, to correct it, to make it more accurate, to expand it and add new episodes and new chapters’.³

When you read it though, you inevitably ask yourself not about individual improvements and supplements to it, but about the essence of the political meaning of this entire book. It presents Lenin, and then both the party and the October overthrow, in a ‘new’ light, a light so incorrect, distorted and specifically Trotskyist that it becomes clear that this has nothing at all to do with Lenin’s future biographers, but rather with the fact that the book *Lenin* is intended as a defence of the special political views of L. Trotsky, and is a means of revealing the special significance in the revolution not of Lenin at all but of the author of the book *Lenin*.

In an article in *Bol’shevik* [*Bolshevik*] (no. 12–13) published in connection with this book, Trotsky writes: ‘This is a book about Lenin. I speak of others, and

1 V. Molotov, ‘Ob urokakh Trotskizma (Po povodu knigi L. Trotskogo *O Lenine*)’, *Pravda*, no. 280, 9 December 1924, pp. 5–6; also in *Izvestiia*, no. 281, 9 December 1924, pp. 5–6.

2 Trotskii 1924a; Trotsky 1971.

3 Trotsky 1971, p. 25.

about myself, only insofar as it is necessary in order to accentuate or highlight this or that aspect of Lenin's activity or his personal features'.⁴ But this caveat, especially about him, is false modesty. In any event Trotsky writes about himself frequently in this book, often emphasising the parallel between Lenin and Trotsky, and when the author deems it desirable, specially showcasing it. A couple of reviews of this book, which are especially sympathetic to the author, reveal this to be the case. The scandalous review by one G. Daian in *Krasnaia nov'* [*Red Virgin Soil*] sharply emphasises this aspect. This review ends with the words: 'Aside from its immediate task, Trotsky's work helps to shed light on the majestic [*velichavnyi*] persona of Trotsky himself. Before us stands not only the image of our late leader, but also the image of his heroic comrade-in-arms who was intertwined with him in the years of revolution. This is the additional benefit of this little book'.⁵

But not only the nimble G. Daian took this view. In the journal, *Pechat' i revoliutsiia* [*Print and Revolution*], V.I. Nevskii published a rapturous review of L. Trotsky's book *Lenin*, in which he wrote: 'Comrade Trotsky's book is in many respects not only a book "on Lenin", but also a book on Trotsky'. In this same review, comrade Nevskii sang an immoderate dithyramb to Trotsky, pompously letting slip: 'I do not intend to write a dithyramb to comrade Trotsky, as I am an enemy of any, and especially party, prayers and akathists; I want to say only that the artistic brush of a person, about whom it can also be said that he is in his own way *primus inter pares*, has produced an image of our leader that is so successful, so faithful, and so dear'.⁶

A number of other reviews also regard the book *Lenin* not only as a book about Lenin, but as a book about Trotsky. However, if this could be explained merely by the excess subjectivism of the author, then it would generally be of relatively minor interest. In reality, the book *Lenin* has a specific political purpose. It was in essence a preparation for 'The Lessons of October' which caused such a stir. The book *Lenin* was written before 'The Lessons of October', but on the fundamental questions of the history of October and our party for this period it says the same as in the unfortunate 'Lessons'. In fact, in the later piece, 'The Lessons', comrade Trotsky went further, expressed himself more openly on a range of issues, but this means only that individual, somehow accidental, episodes and traits from 'notes for the biographer' have the same political significance as 'The Lessons' themselves. The same is being presented

4 Trotsky 1924h, p. 102.

5 *Krasnaia nov'*, 1924, no. 4, p. 341 [original footnote]. [Daian 1924, p. 341].

6 *Pechat' i revoliutsiia*, book 4, 1924, p. 162 [original footnote]. [Nevskii 1924, p. 162].

here in the form of 'reminiscences', presented in 'The Lessons of October' as 'history'. However, in some ways, as we will see later, L. Trotsky was more open in the book *Lenin*, or at any rate more transparent than in 'The Lessons of October'. Take for example the chapter 'The Business of Government', one of the 'completely unexpected' recollections about the movement of Germans into the attack at the start of 1918:

'Once, all of a sudden, Lenin asked, "And what if the White Guards kill you and me? Will Bukharin and Sverdlov manage on their own?"

"Oh, well ... they won't kill us", I answered, laughing.

"Devil only knows", said Lenin and also laughed. At that, the conversation ended'.⁷

This 'completely unexpected' conversation, mentioned only in passing by comrade Trotsky in 1924, is very typical ... typical of Trotsky, of Trotsky in 1924. Surely, G. Daian and V. Nevskii are right that Trotsky's *Lenin* is not only a book about Lenin but also a book about Trotsky? So that there can be no doubt how to understand this passage in L. Trotsky's book, G. Daian clearly explains this in his review: 'There are indirect references as to who among the "disciples" Lenin regarded as his and Trotsky's successors, the best "rising generation"'.⁸ These kinds of 'completely unexpected' recollections and accompanying explanations by the author of the book *Lenin* oblige us to talk about this book as being not only about Lenin but also about its author – L. Trotsky. It is even more accurate to say this: even if in his book *Lenin* the author does not say much new about the real significance of Lenin for the party and the proletarian revolution and not much about Lenin as such that is either inaccurate or ambiguous, or fundamentally incorrect, this book does however provide indispensable material for a description of several political features of Trotsky himself, of Trotskyist views.

A Book about Lenin as 'Notes for a Biography' about Trotsky

It seems to me that the most typical feature of the book *Lenin* might be seen to be its political ambiguity, its internal ideological contradiction. This expresses itself on all the major political questions addressed in this book. Above all, it is most strongly expressed in the evaluation of Lenin, in the characterisation of his personality. In *Lenin* we can find many enthusiastic characterisations of Lenin. In some places these descriptions are very colourful and deft. Examin-

7 L. Trotskii, *O Lenine*, pp. 105–6 [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1971, p. 124].

8 Daian 1924, p. 343.

ing the description of Lenin in the article by [H.G.] Wells – ‘The Dreamer in the Kremlin’,⁹ and in M. Gorky’s article, ‘Vladimir Lenin’,¹⁰ Trotsky for the most part successfully and nimbly exposes the wretched philistinism of Wells, and also the ‘banal psychological analysis’ of Gorky, the *petty-bourgeois* [*meshchanskii*] moralist.¹¹ The ‘bourgeois’ and ‘philistine’, as Lenin called Wells, gets what he deserves from Trotsky.¹² ‘The sacristan of culture’ [*psalomshchik kul’tury*], Gorky, also gets what he deserves as well for the most part.¹³ But whenever Trotsky moves on to his own description of Lenin, things turn out far from well. Thus, for some reason, when Trotsky explained why ‘Lenin often avoided busybodies, mediators, and petitioners’, he felt compelled to add: ‘he (Lenin) preferred to deal with the invisible enemy rather than be distracted by accidental circumstances where he might show himself “too good”’.¹⁴ To characterise Lenin as preferring ‘to deal with the invisible enemy’ can hardly be seen as correct. In any case, to say for example that during the October Revolution, Lenin ‘preferred to deal with the invisible enemy’ just does not fit the bill. It is one thing to dislike ‘visible’ and ‘invisible’ mediators and conversations with them, but it is another thing to engage in a direct fight against class and political enemies together and as the head of those who, with weapons in hand, smash [*bit’*] these very real and wonderfully ‘visible’ enemies on domestic and foreign fronts.

And as we know, Lenin had no shortage of these during the years of revolution.

Another surprising characterisation of Lenin has already been noted in L. Trotsky’s book. Trotsky has turned Lenin from an uncompromising, firm, and decisive revolutionary into someone who ‘stressed the inevitability of terror at every suitable opportunity’,¹⁵ while everybody else, including Trotsky himself, is depicted in a quite different manner. The figure of Lenin in this instance takes

9 H.G. Wells, ‘The Dreamer in the Kremlin’, *The New York Times*, 5 December 1920, pp. 1, 3.

10 Gor’kii 1924, pp. 229–44.

11 Trotsky 1971, p. 166.

12 Trotsky recalled Wells’s condemnation of Lenin in Trotsky 1971, p. 156.

13 The phrase ‘sacristan of culture’ does not appear in Trotsky’s piece on Lenin. It may be a reference to Trotsky’s criticism of Gorky’s use of overtly religious language in praise of Lenin: ‘he straightway intoned a psalm praising Lenin as the Father, the giver of all good things’. Trotsky levelled a similar criticism against Gorky as an uncritical worshipper of culture in his obituary to Gorky in July 1936 (see, respectively, Trotsky 1971, p. 166 and Trotsky 1977, p. 161).

14 Trotsky 1971, p. 182.

15 Trotsky 1971, p. 123.

on a completely farfetched, even distorted, aspect. Isn't it shocking that the author of the book *Lenin* would need to make such an obvious exaggeration and distortion?

Or let's take another example. In the chapter, 'The Business of Government', Trotsky emphasises that in the Smolnyi period Lenin 'repeatedly said that in half a year we would have socialism and would become one of the most powerful states'.¹⁶ He is referring here to the theses on peace written in January 1918. Later on, he says that 'And here, in this sudden transition, he had recourse to a mode peculiarly his own – a certain exaggeration: Yesterday we maintained that socialism is the final aim, today we have to think, talk, and act in such a manner as to secure the socialist order in a few months'.¹⁷ And suddenly, to underline 'the force of his [Lenin's] idealism', Trotsky employs italics: '*He (Lenin) believed in what he was saying*'.¹⁸ By referring to the 'force of his [Lenin's] idealism', one can prove anything one wants, and there is perhaps no internal contradiction in comrade Trotsky's words when he speaks, a few paragraphs earlier, of 'a mode peculiarly his own – a certain exaggeration'¹⁹ at the requisite moment. In any event, comrade Trotsky's own earlier clarifications severely undercut the conviction of his statement about Lenin's oversimplified conception of socialism. One can use 'idealism' as an excuse for many things, but why portray Lenin as if to suggest that others, except for Trotsky apparently, did not know him? Of course, not only the others but Lenin too during this Smolnyi period 'cut corners and foreshorten[ed] distances'²⁰ in his thinking on the future development of the revolution and the construction of the proletarian state, but it is not necessary to ascribe to Lenin such clumsily exaggerated errors which were probably typical of someone but least of all of Lenin. Comrade Trotsky ought to have restricted himself this time to the news that he himself was thinking then about 'corners' and 'distances'. Perhaps then it would have been more understandable why, in the seventh and eighth years of the revolution, L. Trotsky gets upset so often, and why this proletarian revolutionary exhibits such basic intemperance, by trying to find the causes for the delay in the proletarian revolution not so much in objective conditions as in the supposed 'errors' of the current leaders of the communist parties.

16 Trotsky 1971, p. 130.

17 Trotsky 1971, pp. 130–1. Trotsky has dropped the original quotes around the phrase 'final aim'.

18 Trotsky 1971, p. 131.

19 Trotsky 1971, p. 130.

20 Trotsky 1971, p. 131.

In his high-flown 'style', Trotsky writes that 'the brilliant thing here is that through Lenin the young Russian proletariat is freed from the limits of the conditions of its development and becomes universal in historical terms. From the rich soil of Lenin blossoms organically a true, creative, invincible internationalism'.²¹ But along with this comes a certain ambiguity in this characterisation of Lenin and Leninism as when Trotsky says: 'There was a peasant undercurrent in Leninism too, in so far as (this 'in so far as' is apparently necessary in order to grease the beginning of the phrase with its end. v.m.) it exists in our proletariat and runs through the whole of our history ... The peasant undercurrent was interpreted through the proletariat, that is, through the most dynamic force in our history and in history at large; and Lenin gave this interpretation its final form. Precisely in this sense Lenin is the leading expression of the national element'.²²

L. Trotsky repeatedly addresses the question of the 'peasant undercurrent' in Leninism, and of Lenin's 'peasant smarts', and that 'precisely in this sense the peasant-national element (!) was raised to the highest point (!) by Lenin', and alongside phrases about how Lenin brilliantly overcame any kind of limit, he endeavoured to emphasise the 'national' significance of Lenin, his 'muzhik ... innermost being'.²³ However, for the founder and leader of the Third International, we think that more typical than 'muzhik ... innermost being' or raising 'the peasant-national element ... to the highest point' in Lenin was that he (Lenin) assimilated the most important and genuinely revolutionary aspects from the international (including the Russian) workers' movement and from the world movement of all the oppressed peoples against the yoke of imperialism. In Trotsky's above characterisation, there is a sharp ambiguity, a contradiction, and a distortion of Lenin's true international significance. It was not enough just to add that Lenin and Leninism have their 'peasant undercurrent' and the whiff of the 'peasant-national element', but for real proletarian revolutionaries it is necessary to look elsewhere ... for example, among the supporters of the 'permanent [*nepreryvnyi*]' revolution.

21 L. Trotskii, 'O Lenine', p. 99 [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1924a. Despite the original source note, this quotation does not come from the cited page. I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation].

22 L. Trotskii, 'Vernoe i fal'shivoe o Lenine' (emphasis is ours throughout) [original footnote]. [L. Trotskii, 'Vernoe i fal'shivoe o Lenine (Mysli po povodu gor'kovskoi kharakteristiki Lenina)', *Pravda*, no. 228, 7 October 1924, pp. 2–3. This passage is translated very differently in Trotsky 1971, p. 118].

23 Trotsky 1971, p. 118 and p. 153.

And then there is the comparison of Lenin with Marx. And here Trotsky notes on the one hand: 'World history knows only two [genius leaders] who have assumed the leadership of the working class, and these two are Marx and Lenin';²⁴ and in addition Trotsky says: '*Marx was a prophet with the Tables of the Law; Lenin was the executor of the Commandments* (our emphasis. v.m.), addressing himself not to the aristocracy of proletariat as Marx had done, but speaking to the masses, to the people, acquiring new experience in the most difficult conditions, acting, maneuvering, and coming out victorious'.²⁵ And here a certain ambiguity shows through in the characterisation of Lenin. Almost nowhere in his book does Trotsky address the question of the significance of Lenin's theoretical works. If we do not take into consideration the mention of the book *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*,²⁶ then Trotsky, in his book *Lenin*, avoids the issue of the significance of the theoretical works of V.I. Lenin, and the phrase that 'Lenin was the executor of the Commandments' in a way confirms that Trotsky's avoidance of the question of the significance of Lenin's theoretical work is no accident. In any event, this question remains unclear, and even here the impression of ambiguity in the evaluation of Lenin does not disappear.

We will now focus in particular on the way in which Trotsky evaluates Lenin's relationship with the party, and the question of Lenin's role in the October insurrection. We must now move on to Trotsky's basic characterisation of Lenin which is repeated in a number of places. In response to Gorky, Trotsky writes: 'It is impossible to sum up a man in one word. To say that he was "great" or that he was a "genius" really means nothing. But if I were to attempt briefly to define what sort of man Lenin was, I would stress that his whole being was geared to one great purpose [*tseleustremlenyi*]'.²⁷ Trotsky refers to Lenin's 'purposefulness' [*tseleustremennost'*] in a number of places,²⁸ always emphasising that it is a basic trait of v.i. What is this 'purposefulness'? Let's take the definition which completely satisfies comrade Trotsky. He writes: 'Gorky is right when he says that "Lenin is the extraordinary and perfect embodiment of

24 Trotsky 1971, p. 207.

25 Trotsky 1971, p. 205.

26 In the article 'Lenin i staraia *Iskra*', p. 8 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1960b, pp. 21–608; Trotsky 1971, p. 36].

27 Trotsky 1971, p. 169.

28 L. Trotskii, *O Lenine*, pp. 19, 42, 48, 110 et al. [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1971, pp. 71, 129, 145, etc. The word '*tseleustremennost'*' is translated in a variety of ways here: purposefulness, purpose, singleness of purpose, tension toward the goal].

a tense will striving toward the goal”'.²⁹ 'The *tension toward the goal* is Lenin's essential characteristic', concludes comrade Trotsky.³⁰ And so the definition of the 'purposeful Lenin' emphasises, above all, will – the will directed towards a goal. With this Trotsky evidently wanted to underline that the element of will was front and centre in Lenin, that this will contained a striving towards a goal, as if this was 'Lenin's entire essence, his very core'.³¹ After all, Lenin was 'totally geared to one purpose', as Trotsky said of Lenin in 1902.³² However, how correct is this definition of the 'entire essence' of Lenin? It is possible that in the ranks of the party led by V.I. Lenin not a single comrade can be found whose primary trait and 'core' was a will directed towards a particular goal. But the so perceptive G. Daian from *Krasnaia nov'* found that this 'purposefulness', which comrade Trotsky speaks of with such devotion, comprises the 'spirit' of comrade Trotsky himself ...³³

So this is what it is all about! But what should we do with the fact that this book is about Trotsky, but is called *Lenin*? And despite this, G. Daian is far more precise, and in any case more successful in his definition of 'spirit' than is comrade Trotsky. Perhaps we can agree with G. Daian's characterisation of the basic trait ... of the author of the book *Lenin*. But Lenin himself, the genuine and recognised leader of our own and of the entire world proletariat, can in no way be fitted into the Procrustean bed of his 'core' as defined by Trotsky. As the genuine and truly exceptional leader of the revolutionary proletariat, Lenin could not be defined merely by a basic trait of willpower. In any event, it cannot be said at all that Lenin's 'entire essence' and 'core' were contained in his will and his striving for a goal. Given all of the wonderful 'purposefulness', given an unbowlable will, Lenin would not be Lenin if this will and all its purposefulness were not channelled into the Leninist course of correct proletarian politics and mature Marxist communist ideology, which are at least just as telling of Lenin as are the will and one-dimensional purposefulness that Trotsky's sees in him. Lenin's fundamental and special 'feature' was that will did not dominate reason, but on the contrary the reason of our leader, unusually gifted and imbued with the essence of the basic gains of contemporary science and the experience of the international workers' movement, fused with revolutionary will, or, if you will, with purposefulness. It seems to us therefore completely

29 Trotsky 1971, p. 166. The quotation is from Gorky 1924, p. 229.

30 Trotsky 1971, p. 166.

31 This does not appear to be a direct quotation.

32 Trotsky 1971, p. 66.

33 *Krasnaia nov'*, 1924, no. 4 [original footnote]. [Daian 1924, p. 342].

futile and quite wrong to emphasise Lenin's purposefulness, as Trotsky does in his characterisation of Lenin. In any event, this feature makes up no more than, and much less than, half of Lenin's real 'essence and core'. Overzealously emphasising Lenin's purposefulness might be understandable only if Lenin is viewed as one of the 'executors of the Commandments'. But Trotsky decided not to state this directly (i.e. what he said when comparing Lenin with Marx) in his definition of Lenin's 'purposefulness'.

We can only agree with Trotsky that it is impossible to sum up Lenin in one word. Although for our part we do not want to risk offering such short definitions, we think it useful and important, just to counter this one-dimensional definition of 'purposefulness', to emphasise a quality of Lenin which is beyond dispute for anyone who knew Lenin directly, or indirectly (from his literary legacy), and for all those who are still to get to know him. This quality is integrity [*tseľnost'*], Lenin's absolute internal coherence. The figure of Lenin stands before our eyes as if cast from a mould, as if carved from a single block. Here is a description by comrade Trotsky that strikes us as far more fitting: 'in one man both the essence of revolutionary thought and the indomitable energy of the proletariat. Such a man is Vladimir Il'ich [Lenin]'.³⁴ Recalling his first acquaintance with Lenin in 1902, Trotsky points out that even at that time 'Lenin remained Lenin'. And to say after this that the basic trait and core of Lenin is 'purposefulness' is to give a one-dimensional, incorrect, false characterisation of Lenin. Wrongly stressing purposefulness explains the following definition of 'the main well-spring of the Leninist spirit': 'The deep and unyielding conviction that there were tremendous possibilities (!) for human development for which one could, and should, pay the price of suffering and sacrifice – this was the main well-spring of the Leninist spirit'.³⁵

Allow yourself to question this! Allow yourself to doubt the idea that belief in the 'possibilities (!) for human development' is sufficient for any (!) 'suffering and sacrifice'. Isn't this definition of the 'Leninist spirit' really just a phrase, and moreover an embarrassingly pompous, one-dimensionally false one?

This causes comrade Trotsky to go too far on the issue of purposefulness. Purposefulness is after all a good and very necessary thing. Without genuine

34 L. Trotskii, *O Lenine*, p. 152. From a speech at a meeting of the CEC on 2 September 1918 [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1971, p. 198. The original term is 'working class', rather than 'proletariat', as translated here].

35 L. Trotskii, *O Lenine*, p. 113 [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1971, p. 131. The phrase 'the main well-spring of the Leninist spirit' is my own translation of the original (*glavnaia pruzhina leninskogo dukha*), and replaces the original, blander translation 'hallmark of Leninism'].

revolutionary purposefulness, there cannot only be no great leader of the communist revolution, there can be no decent revolutionary communist in general either. However, when this purposefulness, or in other words the will to achieve a goal, prevails over sensible choice of the means to this end, then 'purposefulness' can lead to great misfortune. This, so to speak, is the obverse side of the definition of 'purposefulness' when it is not defined by the correct 'Leninist' understanding. One of the typical examples of the most dangerous errors committed by people who are too 'purposeful' is the memorable Brest period.

In his book *Lenin*, comrade Trotsky devotes a special chapter, 'Brest Litovsk', to this period. In this chapter, he endeavours in every possible way to prove – how can I put this a bit more politely! – the completely unprovable. He tries to convince the reader that there was in essence 'not the slightest shade of disagreement' between him and Lenin!³⁶

This part of the book is especially redolent with comrade Trotsky's 'recollections'. Entire pages of dialogue between Trotsky and Lenin, reconstructed in living detail by Trotsky, must, whatever the cost, show that if Trotsky was indeed different from Lenin at this time, it was surely only in one thing – great farsightedness, a great ability to get out of the most difficult situations. In addition to all his other merits, it turns out that Trotsky was responsible, no more no less, for saving the party from splitting at this moment. Pages 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85 and 86 are full of these kinds of dialogues between Trotsky and Lenin, which Trotsky wants to use to show the advantages of his pathetically well-known formula: 'We stop the war but do not sign the peace'.³⁷ Although Trotsky adds the caveat that 'the conversations in this chapter are not, of course, quoted word for word',³⁸ this is only a caveat, – as Chernyshevsky put it, to 'the reader with the penetrating eye',³⁹ or perhaps simply from an excess of modesty.

This entire chapter is so confused, so internally contradictory, so filled with a desire to prove the unprovable, that it is very difficult to analyse in detail here. It would be necessary to do this separately. We can only advise comrades who are interested in the actual history of the Brest period to acquaint themselves directly with the documents of the Brest period. After all, much has already been published on this. It is especially useful to read through Trotsky's own speech at the Seventh Congress of the party.⁴⁰ From the protocols of the congress and

36 Trotsky 1971, p. 100.

37 Trotsky 1971, p. 101.

38 Trotsky 1971, p. 105.

39 Tchernyshevsky 1886, p. 152.

40 *Sed'moi Ekstrennyi S'ezd* 1962, pp. 65–72.

above all from this speech by Trotsky and from Lenin's response to him, it is possible to discern Trotsky's real attitude to the question of revolutionary war, which the 'Left Communists' were so eagerly defending at that time. These protocols, and especially the part of Trotsky's speech where he speaks about the attitude to signing a peace with the Ukrainian Rada, show convincingly that at that time Trotsky was far closer to the highly dangerous and directly disastrous policy of the 'Left Communists' than to the careful and restrained revolutionary proletarian policy of Lenin.⁴¹ Only in light of Lenin's direct ultimatum that he would withdraw from the CC did Trotsky, together with some of the 'Left Communists', abstain in the CC, and this gave Lenin the chance to get a majority in the CC and adopt a correct resolution.

The mistakes by Trotsky and other comrades in the Brest period have not often been recalled in recent years, but now, when books are being written to justify the most perilous political errors, we must be reminded that no 'dialogues', no 'recollections', even if 'for a biographer', can discard the facts and the indisputable documents about these facts.

The Brest period showed that the strongest 'purposefulness' not only can benefit the revolution, but can also lead to its ruin. There can be no doubt at all about the revolutionary purposefulness of Trotsky and the 'Left Communists' in this period. But save us, posterity, from this 'purposefulness'! A little less 'purposefulness' is better, and in its place more of what Lenin taught us, of everything that inspired this figure: more ability to link the goal and the means, ability to combine revolutionary will and proletarian reason in pursuit of the basic tasks of the Communist revolution.

And so purposefulness is not Lenin's 'core' and is by no means 'his entire essence'. With some people this is perhaps indeed the case with 'purposefulness', but Lenin was Lenin – forged, whole, while Trotsky was, let's say, 'purposeful', one-dimensionally strong-willed in his personal traits and ambivalent, internally contradictory in his politics, particularly at critical historical junctures. But have we really reached the point where we have to prove that Lenin is not Trotsky, and Trotsky is not Lenin?

'Lenin became the Lenin he was to remain',⁴² as L. Trotsky already acknowledged at the start of the 1900s. Since then, having led the party, he knows how to be 'different things to different people' at one and the same time: unshakably decisive and flexible over time as a fighter-politician and a Marxist theoretician,

41 Once again: it is useful to read the protocols of the Seventh Congress of the party [original footnote]. [*Sed'moi Ekstrennyi S'ezd* 1962].

42 Trotsky 1971, p. 31.

provisionally national for the Russian Revolution and provisionally internationalist as the creator and leader of the Third International, etc., etc.

Nonetheless, Lenin embodies the age of proletarian revolution, the working class that rises up against capitalism, and, perhaps above all else, its ideology and party – Bolshevism. And nonetheless, Lenin was forged and whole, as forged and whole as the monolithic Bolshevik Party itself. Lenin was the embodiment of the viscera, the core of the Bolshevik Party, which throughout its entire history remained the proletarian party without match in the whole world, and which throughout its entire history, and not only in the ‘decisive year’ (as comrade Trotsky likes to call 1917 – incidentally the year Trotsky joined our party), proved that it had not fought its 15-year struggle in vain against opportunists, vacillators, and conciliationists, including Trotskyist elements, in the revolutionary workers’ movement.

During the long years of preparation for October, Trotsky was not with our party, and for the most part fought bitterly against it, finding himself in the same ranks as its Menshevik opponents. We have no reason to doubt that at that time also comrade Trotsky possessed adequate revolutionary purposefulness, but what he lacked was an understanding of the real ways to prepare for October, an understanding of Bolshevik politics and of the construction of a truly proletarian party – he was unable to find this in Bolshevism right up to the revolution. So, joining our party two to three months before the October insurrection, he applied his purposefulness to enormous effect in the era of insurrection, but, as has become clear now, he had by no means eliminated the ideological vacillations and contradictions of his Menshevik past. And so, alongside this great revolutionary purposefulness which indisputably brought real benefit to the party and the working class (so needed when it was directed along the correct path at the necessary moment, as it was during the October days), it was also possible to perceive in the ideology and especially in comrade Trotsky’s political line, the internal contradictoriness, ambiguity, holdovers, and vestiges of the Trotskyism which had marched lockstep with Menshevism in the long years of preparation for October. Trotsky’s political ambiguity and internal contradictoriness are thrown into sharp relief by the extraordinary coherence and indestructible internal unity of Lenin’s entire persona. These latter traits of Lenin reflect the true core of the Bolshevik Party. This cannot be demanded of everyone.

On the Attitude to the Party: The Example of Lenin and the Example of Trotsky

The book *Lenin* of course pays a great deal of attention to the Leninist party. Whatever the title of this book, even if it is only 'Notes for a Biographer', it is about the leader, the creator, the eternal guide, the living embodiment of the party of the October overthrow. Obviously, in this book, a major section of which is called 'The Revolution', the party should take pride of place. In Trotsky's book, it does not turn out like that, not even a little. The party appears here and there in tales of individual episodes, and usually in such an unsightly and unprepossessing form that it is difficult to recognise it in Trotsky's depiction of our glorious 'Bolshevik cohort'. Of course Trotsky is not speaking about the party in general, only its connection with Lenin. But he describes the relationship between Lenin and the party in such a way that both Lenin and the party look nothing like themselves. Clever people are trying to explain this. Let us quote again (one last time!) G. Daian's enthusiastic review: 'Comrade Trotsky is spreading one more erroneous idea about Lenin. It is generally accepted (!) that the party always and ever humbly (!) followed Lenin, reverently following each wave of his director's baton (!). Trotsky destroys this legend. He shows us a Lenin fighting against the established views of the party, a Lenin who gives in sometimes and is on his own'.⁴³

Only such an absurdly enthusiastic reviewer like G. Daian could spread such claptrap and nonsense in a few phrases. That reviewer shows clearly enough how the true spirit of our party is antithetical to him, and how he himself is antithetical to this party, but the trouble is that they are trying to use Trotsky's book *Lenin* to support this characterisation of Lenin's relationship with the party, a characterisation that is a slap in the face of truth. The trouble is that the book *Lenin* nurtures similar ideas about the party and about Lenin.

If we turn to the book itself, it really does give many ambiguous descriptions of our party, and Lenin's relationship to the party is reflected as if in a distorting mirror. The disagreements in the party in 1917 are inflated especially diligently. The disagreements at that time between several comrades and Lenin are depicted here as if the entire party was directly opposed to its leader. Trotsky is clearly looking for an analogy with his current situation in the party and 'makes the facts work' [*natiagivaet tetivu*] far too hard. He takes special pleasure in emphasising how Lenin fought against those 'Old Bolsheviks' who 'more than once already have played so regrettable a role in the history of our party by

43 Daian 1924, pp. 341–2.

reiterating formulas senselessly learned by rote.⁴⁴ Comrade Trotsky likes this phrase about 'Old Bolsheviks' so much that he repeats it later in 'The Lessons of October', where, poisoned with the worst aspects of Trotskyism, it is already transformed into a weapon of struggle against the basic Bolshevik cadres.⁴⁵ Trotsky, only blurring the picture in passing, tells of the start of his approach towards our party at this moment. It is eased along by the common phrases customary to this author. However, the mistakes and vacillations of some Bolshevik comrades are emphasised in the entire history of our party in this period and represented in a completely untrue light.

In the same 'The Lessons of October', these acknowledged errors of individual comrades (Kamenev, Zinoviev, etc.) serve as the main theme and are presented in an unequivocally distorted way. On the question of the attitude to the party and on the events surrounding the October insurrection, the book *Lenin* is closely linked with the book 1917. For the most part, the same issues are being discussed, although what was said in the book *Lenin* sotto voce, through hints and equivocations, was turned by Trotsky in 'The Lessons of October' into a political platform for an attack by Trotskyism on ... Lenin and Leninism.

At the end of 'The Lessons of October', Trotsky makes his bows, as is his wont, before the party: 'Without a party, separately from a party, bypassing a party, or with a substitute for a party, the proletarian revolution cannot triumph. This is the main lesson of the past decade.'⁴⁶ This is what Trotsky says on the question of the impending revolution ... in England.⁴⁷ And here, for the sake of comparison, is what he says in the same article about our party in 1917: 'It took a year, during which all Russia threw off the dirty clothing of bourgeois domination, *before the party could make up its mind* [our emphasis. v.m.] to change its name, having returned to the tradition of Marx and Engels'.⁴⁸ It need only be said: this is what the Bolshevik Party is worth in 1917! However, neither we, the members of this party, nor the broad worker masses, have to be told that the Bolshevik Party in 1917, before comrade Trotsky's arrival in its ranks, was worth something and deserved to lead the Russian vanguard of the international proletariat, a vanguard which was moving towards victory.

Here we see, one time too many, the ambiguity that is so typical of Trotsky, even vis-à-vis the party. This is the same ambiguity which in January 1924

44 Trotsky 1971, p. 78. Trotsky is quoting Lenin here (Lenin 1964b, p. 44).

45 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 94.

46 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 132.

47 L. Trotsky, 1917, 'Uroki Oktiabria', p. LX [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1924d, p. lx].

48 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 106.

dictated these words to him: 'The party was living, as it were, on two storeys: the upper storey, where things are decided, and the lower storey, where all you do is learn of the decisions'.⁴⁹ And four months later at the Thirteenth Congress of the party, comrade Trotsky delivered his insincere and pompous words: 'In the final analysis, the party is always right'.⁵⁰

Comrade Trotsky's attitude to the party also shares this same political ambiguity. Yesterday, he was a ghastly party 'democrat' (we will not recall now what Trotsky was the day before yesterday); today, in the book *Lenin*, he, as is his wont, completely distorts the relationship between Lenin and the party. According to this – follow it not only in his book *Lenin* but also in 'The Lessons of October' – Lenin is good, in Trotsky's depiction, when he is vehemently pressuring the party, or when he unilaterally, without consulting the party or asking the CC, solves important questions of the revolution, at times in passing, at times in deliberation with individual comrades. This is how, for example, Lenin is depicted in the chapter 'The Dispersal of the Constituent Assembly'. Trotsky offers this rough little picture of the relationship between Lenin and the party at critical moments at least. In 1917, Lenin 'organized a struggle within his own party against those "Old Bolsheviks", who' etc., etc ... Or: 'Lenin demanded (from the party, or what? v.m.) a definite break'⁵¹ with bourgeois liberalism and defencism. Or: 'The party itself was not yet aware ... Lenin was leading it, unfalteringly'.⁵²

These are the words Trotsky uses to depict the relations between Lenin and the party. These are the ways of dealing with the party which seem to Trotsky to be not only the most realistic, but apparently more suitable by their very nature. This is one of the examples of how some party 'democrats' see the relationship of the leader and the party. Such ideas about the party do not so much recall the active life of the party organisation but actually recall a completely different organisation built on completely different principles than the party has been built upon.

In due course, v.i. said of comrade Trotsky's theses on trade unions: 'Heroism, zeal, etc., are the positive side of military experience; red-tape and arrogance are the negative side of the experience of the worst military types. Trotsky's theses, whatever his intentions, do not tend to play up the best, but the worst in military experience'.⁵³ Let's mention now by the way that both in his

49 L. Trotskii, *Novyi kurs*, p. 9 [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1965a, p. 13].

50 *Trinadtsatyi s'ezd* 1924, p. 167.

51 L. Trotskii, *O Lenine*, p. 54 [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1971, p. 78].

52 L. Trotskii, *O Lenine*, p. 52 [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1971, p. 77].

53 V.I. Lenin, vol. XVIII, part I, p. 23 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1965h, p. 37].

theses and in his little books comrade Trotsky avoided putting in a bad light those of his qualities that Lenin had earlier pointed out.

Trotsky was completely wrong in his characterisation of the relationship between Lenin and the party. Neither in 1917 nor at any other time did Lenin have the kind of relationship with the party that is described in the book *Lenin* and in 'The Lessons of October'. Lenin was able to stand at the head of the party mainly because his brilliant leadership of the party was recognised, it was not imposed upon it, it was presented not in terms of Lenin's 'demands' on the party, but on the contrary because Lenin was strongest, most far-sighted, and because he clearly expressed the ideas and will of the party. Lenin therefore can in no way be counterposed to the party. Lenin was able to oppose one or another part of the party in individual instances, but can a party which is developing as part of real life avoid a battle of views, individual disagreements? We would welcome comrade Trotsky if he were to pursue a tireless struggle in our party for Leninism, for the ideological and political principles of Bolshevism, as Lenin has done; and not as L. Trotsky is doing more and more often now, having taken on the pathetic task of grafting onto the party the heated-over, specifically Trotskyist notions which have invariably been hopeless failures in the course of the revolution. More than once Lenin had to fight to overcome one or another opinion in the party, but Lenin did not set himself against the party, he was always with it, always the first and recognised leader of the party. It would not hurt to learn from Lenin's experience that the pretension to lead in our party can be based only on the kind of attitude to the party which Lenin displayed. In this area the history of the party must yet unveil its most informative pictures, informative, comrade Trotsky, not only for the Communists of the Lenin Levy. Informative because Trotsky took the dangerous path of setting himself in opposition to the party. But if now, in his own defence, he wants to depict Lenin retrospectively as opposing the party, he will not succeed in this. Nobody will succeed in this.

Comrade Trotsky himself, having worked in the party only since the time of the revolution, could earlier only observe Lenin's relationship with the party from the sidelines. And his depiction does not tell us about the actual state of affairs, it tells us what apparently he sees as natural and legitimate. To this we can say however that we must be very cautious about relying on our own experience and our own idea of the party. Trotsky has taken an active part in revolutionary work for more than two decades. He was a direct and close observer of the twists and turns of life inside our party and in the party of the Mensheviks. In this sense, his experience is, as it were, broader and more diverse than the experience of many Old Bolsheviks. But precisely because of this, this experience is not always applicable to our party.

For many years Trotsky tried to remain outside of the factions, endeavouring to play the role of a non-factional mediator and sometimes even standing outside of the Menshevik organisation. In fact, he never managed to fulfil the role of a true mediator. Throughout nearly the entire pre-revolutionary period, Trotsky's non-factionalism in fact boiled down to support for the Mensheviks. Indeed, the more comrade Trotsky assumed the role of 'mediator', the wider the split became between the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions, and the more they became separate parties. But a fact is a fact. Trotsky often tried to find a place between the warring factions, or to be above the party organisations. In any event, he generally did not feel in any way embarrassed by his participation in the amorphous Menshevik organisation because this organisation had met his needs for many years. He did not join the Bolshevik organisation before the revolution.

In connection with the above, two more conclusions must be drawn about Trotsky's attitude to the party at the present moment.

First conclusion. If during the pre-revolutionary period, when Trotsky was in fact in thrall to the Mensheviks, he futilely sought 'to play the role of the mediator' between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, Trotsky has now taken on the opposite task. And the book *Lenin*, and even more 'The Lessons of October', are engaged in inflating individual past disagreements inside the party. The former 'mediator' is now assuming the role of reckless fire-setter [*azartnyi razzhigatel'*] of the disagreements in our party. To this end, in 1924 events are being dragged out kicking and screaming from the party's history in 1917. Trotsky in 1924 is trying without success to continue the role of Lenin who mercilessly chastised these mistakes in the October era. This does not suit L. Trotsky at all, and nothing will come of it, just as nothing came of Trotsky's former 'conciliationism'. Trotsky's articles, which are demoralising the party, are not achieving their aim: in October the party got past the mistakes of individual comrades, and is now getting past Trotsky's mistakes and moving forward.

But the difference between those comrades who made mistakes during the October days and comrade Trotsky is that they have long since and unequivocally acknowledged their past mistakes, while Trotsky has not only failed to muster the courage to acknowledge even his basic mistakes, he now adds new, even cruder political mistakes to his earlier ones.

Second conclusion. During the long pre-revolutionary years, Trotsky's party status was for the most part that of the revolutionary loner. Sometimes completely, sometimes partially linking up organisationally with the Menshevik organisation, Trotsky at that time, in the Menshevik party of that period, was able to enjoy the luxury of the revolutionary intellectual who was not organ-

ically connected with any party organisation, who had not firmly settled into a party organisation at least for the long term. Trotsky matured politically at this time as a Marxist intellectual, as a revolutionary loner. It was therefore not possible for the persona of a genuine proletarian revolutionary – the Bolshevik type – to emerge from Trotsky. But at least from the end of the February period of the 1917 revolution, Trotsky, moving over to the ranks of the Bolshevik Party, should have understood that he could no longer maintain his former attitude to the party organisation. What was possible for Trotsky in the past vis-à-vis the Menshevik Party was impossible vis-à-vis our party even earlier; this will continue to be impossible vis-à-vis the Bolshevik Party in the future as long as it remains a truly Leninist, Bolshevik party. No words of praise, no phrases recognising the great significance of the party can substitute for a true and correct, proletarian revolutionary attitude towards it. So comrade Trotsky must understand that his intransigence with Bolshevism is both an ambiguous attitude to the party and an internal contradiction within his current political position.

On the October Insurrection, on the New Theory of Intelligence and Reconnoitering, and on the Slogans of October

For all of us, Lenin and the October Revolution are inextricable. On the role of Lenin in the October insurrection, the role of the true leader, the genuine inspiration and guide of the party and the masses, L. Trotsky, in his chapter ‘The Uprising’, provides his own ‘new’ interpretation and evaluation of Lenin during the October events. Lenin appears before us primarily in the role of a conspirator [*zagovorshchik*], and a very unsuccessful conspirator at that. It turns out that, finding himself in the underground before October, ‘he demanded that a *conspiracy* [*zagovor*] should be organized immediately’ (our emphasis. v.m.).⁵⁴ It turns out that Lenin overestimated the astuteness and resoluteness of the enemy, and demanded from the party something that it could not and should not do in the critical days before the insurrection. Trotsky tellingly quarrels with Lenin in his book *Lenin*, or at least with the Lenin of Trotsky’s imagination: ‘And yet the party could not seize power by itself, *independently of the Soviets and behind its back ...* This ... might have had harmful repercussions within the Petersburg garrison.’⁵⁵

54 Trotsky 1971, p. 84. I prefer the word ‘conspiracy’ as a translation for the Russian word ‘zagovor’, rather than the word ‘cabal’ as used in the published translation.

55 Trotsky 1971, pp. 92–3. The word ‘Petersburg’ does not appear in the original Russian quotation.

Elaborating on the situation in the Central Committee on the eve of October, L. Trotsky again emphasises Lenin's position, which, he says, demanded 'the immediate organization of the uprising, independently of the Soviets'.⁵⁶ Finally, a few pages later, L. Trotsky describes the most critical moment of the October insurrection – the evening of 25 October. We see this: 'I understood that it was *only then that he* (Lenin) *finally made peace* with the fact that we had rejected a seizure of power by means of a conspiratorial plot. [...] *Only now, that is on the evening of October 25*, did he become more composed and give his definite approval to the path the events were taking' (p. 75).⁵⁷

To show that these are not simply excerpts from haphazard, frivolously written reminiscences, which it is still possible to 'correct', make 'more accurate', and 'expand' (words from the foreword),⁵⁸ these examples from the book *Lenin* must be supplemented with references to corresponding pages in 'The Lessons of October'. In these 'Lessons', Trotsky, in addition to all the above, adds that Lenin advised launching the insurrection in Moscow (a complete falsification of the relevant directives. v.m.), while instructing Lenin in the following manner: 'It is one thing to organise an armed insurrection under the naked slogan of *the seizure of power by the party* (our emphasis. v.m.), but quite another to prepare and then carry out an insurrection under the slogan of defending the rights of the Congress of Soviets'.⁵⁹

After all this it is worth having a look at the leader of the October Revolution through Trotsky's spectacles. We see not Lenin, not our Il'ich, but a totally pathetic image of a person trapped by events. In his condescending way, of course, Trotsky finds a justification for this Lenin: this Lenin overestimated the quick wits of the enemy, this Lenin did not have the chance while in hiding to appreciate the fundamental transformation that was occurring at that time in the course of the revolutionary events and moods. At the same time, after all, Lenin on the evening of 25 October (Trotsky adds: 'only now, that is on the evening of October 25! ...') understood (understood!) 'the path the events were taking'. But after this justification of monstrous mistakes ascribed to Lenin (a secret conspiracy, seizure of power by the party behind the backs of the Soviets, etc.), Lenin can no longer be placed among the true leaders of the October overthrow. To judge from Trotsky – he should not be put there! Trotsky had prepared a quite different place for him.

56 Trotsky 1971, p. 93.

57 Our emphasis in all of these quotations. – v.m. [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1971, p. 96. I have edited this quotation to render it truer to the sense of the Russian original].

58 Trotsky 1971, p. 25.

59 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 124.

Let's now compare this with the way Trotsky depicts his own role in the October events. His book *Lenin* does not deal so clearly with this, unlike the well-known 'The Lessons of October'. In the latter piece, Trotsky depicts himself as the organiser of the 'silent', almost 'legal', or, as he still says, 'dry' armed insurrection of 9 October to which 'the insurrection of 25 October was merely a supplement'.⁶⁰ It turns out that when 'we, the Petrograd Soviet, protested against Kerensky's order transferring two-thirds of the garrison to the front, we were in fact already in a state of armed insurrection. Lenin, who was not in Petrograd, did not appreciate the full significance of this fact'.⁶¹ Later on, according to Trotsky, it turns out that over two weeks before the Congress of Soviets, the October overthrow was already three-quarters, if not nine-tenths, a reality.⁶²

We can now see the complete canvas for this picture of Lenin and Trotsky in the October days: one – Lenin – is a pathetic conspirator, the other – Trotsky – had carried out 'nine-tenths' of the insurrection. We see Lenin – the failure of the 'secret conspiracy', and, next to him, L. Trotsky – the hero of the 'silent' insurrection.

It is easy for both the party and broad, non-party circles to compare, to choose! It is difficult even to imagine that comrade Trotsky consciously desired the kind of comparison that emerged in his piece. But in fact we see a direct contrast emerge between him and Lenin, and a completely mendacious picture of Lenin's and Trotsky's participation in and influence on the events. There was also a clearly and fundamentally falsified depiction of all the basic facts of the October overthrow. It is completely impossible to countenance the idea that such a description of the events of the October overthrow would have been possible two or three years ago when Lenin was still alive, even if it had been written by this same L. Trotsky. But now, not only the participants in the October events but also all those who are interested in and are studying this era can see splendidly the complete inconsistency and falsity of the description of the October events and of the leading comrades' role as portrayed in Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October'. A range of basic facts have already appeared in print now from which the real picture of the October events can be reconstructed. There can be no doubt at all that a simple description of the facts will utterly destroy Trotsky's depiction.

It is worth noting once again that the internal contradictions in Trotsky's description of the events of the October era do not simply poke through, they

60 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 123.

61 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 122.

62 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 123.

stick out like a sore thumb. In Trotsky's depiction, already in mid-October Lenin is defending a secret conspiracy 'behind the backs of the Soviet', and yet it turns out that the events were developing splendidly in 'legal', 'silent' ways, and on 25 October 'only a small supplemental insurrection was needed to cut the umbilical cord of the February state system'.⁶³ Consequently, neither Lenin nor the party, neither the workers nor the soldiers, noticed when they had accomplished the 'main' insurrection. Or consider what we have here: on the one hand, in Trotsky's depiction Lenin remains a secret conspirator until the evening of 25 October, demanding the seizure of power as soon as possible, not waiting for the Congress of Soviets, but on the other hand it turns out that in fact the insurrection was already 'nine-tenths' a reality at least two weeks before 25 October, and the Congress of Soviets merely sanctioned it. Lenin ultimately turns out to have been something of a simpleton who understood nothing and at the same time even saw nothing.

After such a description of the October overthrow, are the many tens of compliments directed at Lenin by this same L. Trotsky really necessary, do they mean anything at all? It has to be one or the other: either Lenin was indeed nothing more than Trotsky's characterisation of him – pathetic, futilely 'purposeful', a run-of-the-mill leader – or L. Trotsky's 'recollections' and 'history' were in too many respects distorted and false. Either Lenin was not the real Lenin – the soul and leader of October, as the party and the broadest masses of toilers knew him – or L. Trotsky's 'recollections' and 'history' were thoroughly saturated and poisoned with the worst aspects of Trotskyism, whose narcissism knew no bounds. For us, and also for the reader, it is clear where the truth lies. Much has already been said about Lenin's role in the October Revolution, and much more will be said in the future. The factual materials from the era of the October events are too rich for Lenin's role, as the leader of the party of the October overthrow, to be distorted or mangled by bad books like *Lenin* and by bad histories of October like Trotsky's 'The Lessons'.

Let's move on to the next question.

The book *Lenin* also deals with the preparatory period of October. Both in this book and in 'The Lessons of October', L. Trotsky devoted special attention to the internal party disagreements of that period. We have already said how wrong and distorted was comrade Trotsky's depiction of the disagreements in our party at that time. Now, in connection with the question of the pre-October revolutionary era, we must spend more time on one major error committed by

63 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 127.

comrade Trotsky in his analysis of these events and the role of our party in them. This error is further transformed into a much more general mistake, typical of Trotsky and Trotskyism. Comrade Trotsky develops a kind of special theory of revolutionary intelligence and reconnaissance. He says: 'At the time of the Third Congress of the Comintern, Lenin once said, "In July 1917 we committed not a few silly blunders". What he meant was that military action had been premature and that our demonstration had taken much too aggressive a form, if one measured our forces against the vastness of the country' (p. 59).⁶⁴ Comrade Trotsky again refers to this on p. 67:

What were these 'blunders'? Energetic, perhaps too energetic experiments; trying to find hastily, perhaps too hastily, how far we could press forward. From time to time *this kind of reconnoitring was necessary, otherwise we would have lost contact with the masses* (our emphasis. v.m.). On the other hand, it is well known that scouts too far in advance may sometimes – whether one wants it or not – involve one in a major battle. This did not happen in July. The retreat was sounded in time.⁶⁵

Comrade Trotsky needs this 'theory of revolutionary intelligence and reconnoitring', which he offers pre-emptively in the two opening chapters on the October overthrow, in order that in the following chapter, entitled 'Brest Litovsk', he can justify his own mistakes at Brest. He says here: 'Our party, having so recently emerged from the hot furnace of October, had to test itself in the international arena', and he calls himself and his supporters 'partisans of the tentative *policy* (our emphasis. v.m.) of "neither war nor peace"'. And to shore up once and for all his intolerable justification of the Brest position, L. Trotsky says: 'Three years later we took another chance – this one at Lenin's initiative – *to sound, with the help of our bayonets* (our emphasis. v.m.) the situation in Poland, the Poland of the bourgeoisie and petty nobility. We were repulsed. What was then the difference between the Polish "sounding" and the Brest Litovsk test? (i.e. with Trotsky's position during Brest-Litovsk. v.m.)? As to the general principle, there was no difference; there was only one in the degree of the risk we took'.⁶⁶ But the editorial board of *Bol'shevik* has already quite clearly rejected this attempt to justify Trotsky's Brest position by using Lenin's sounding, with the help of bayonets, of the Poland of the bourgeoisie and petty

64 Trotsky 1971, p. 82.

65 Trotsky 1971, p. 90.

66 Trotsky 1971, p. 104 and p. 107.

nobility in 1920. This was explained by the core difference ('the intellectual risk' and 'the physical risk') between Brest and Warsaw, a difference which L. Trotsky has not yet noticed.⁶⁷

But we need to take a close look at the entire 'theory of revolutionary intelligence and reconnoitering', devised by L. Trotsky both to vindicate his own mistakes at Brest and to expose the 'right wing' of the Bolsheviks. In Trotsky's depiction, it turns out that the party acted, almost every month, on the basis of 'reconnoitering' and 'soundings'. The armed demonstration of the soldiers against the Provisional Government on 21 April was – reconnoitering. The Bolsheviks' arrangement of the demonstration for 21 April – reconnoitering. The July events – soundings. And comrade Trotsky sees in this a logical connection for testing out the international situation in the age of Brest and for sounding out Poland in 1920.

The history of our revolution has to be dealt with more seriously, though, than comrade Trotsky does. Comrade Trotsky is correct only that in 1920 there was indeed a decision to take a sounding, with the help of our bayonets, which, it is true, turned out to be a mistake the party recognised early on. Comrade Trotsky is also correct that the peaceful demonstration of 10 July, proposed by the Bolsheviks, was also one of the ways of sounding out the mood of the masses and the political situation as a whole. However, at the same time this example should also clearly reveal the position of the party vis-à-vis 'testing out' and 'reconnoitering'. The party dealt with it so carefully that it even agreed to call off the peaceful demonstration, after it had taken account of the demand of the then non-Bolshevik Petrograd Soviet. Instead, comrade Trotsky portrays this, one of the first spontaneous revolutionary mass actions in April, as reconnoitring undertaken by party at the behest of the Central Committee and somehow against the will of the 'right' Bolsheviks! He makes the same mistake with regard to the July events. The July events were in no way prepared and organised in advance by the party. On the contrary, despite the party's suggestions, there was an armed rally on 3 July even before the machine-gunners joined in, and before the later involvement of the Petersburg soldiers and workers. The party understood its role here, as the leader of the masses – a leader striving at this moment to give a more organised character to an incipient and once again spontaneous action.

Once this spontaneous movement began to spread, the party decided to lead it, but (having discussed in the Central and Petersburg Committees the general political situation) decided to keep it within the framework of a cau-

67 'Po povodu stat'i tov. Trotskogo' 1924, p. 106.

tionary demonstration. Only in this latter sense, and not as an event prepared by the party in advance, can the July demonstration be seen as sounding out the political situation. It is understandable from this why the party is so extremely careful in its attitude then and now to revolutionary feelers and soundings. It is understandable from this how strained and unpersuasive are Trotsky's attempts to explain his own mistake at Brest as the product of the 'theory of revolutionary intelligence and reconnoitering' of the international situation. His effort to defend this obvious mistake, about which he should be a little more objective after more than six years, must not be dismissed now as too pretentious and simply comical. If we add to the old mistake this more recent mistaken 'theory of revolutionary intelligence and reconnoitering' – it means that he is not moving forward but backward, getting more and more tangled up in the luxurious clothing of his own political contradictions.

This newest 'theory' of revolutionary tactics is to its core antithetical to our party because it smacks too much of revolutionary adventurism. The effort to defend the 'theory of revolutionary intelligence and reconnoitering' using the example of Brest emphasises precisely this negative feature, its closeness to the most dangerous kind of adventurism. In this instance, it is designed primarily to conceal comrade Trotsky's lack of a clear revolutionary position in the Brest era. If the party had indeed taken this path, it would have been the path of the most disastrous revolutionary adventures. At that time this 'theory', along with those who followed it, would definitely have ended up being the debris of a failed revolution. Therefore, despite all the superficial 'revolutionary spirit' of L. Trotsky's position, despite all the superficial 'leftism' of the theory of intelligence and reconnoitering, both are antithetical to Leninist revolutionary tactics.

We must now examine comrade Trotsky's mendacious, or rather muddled, interpretations of individual slogans of the October era. One moment in the book *Lenin* is especially typical in this regard. Describing how, from the first days of the overthrow, bourgeois, SR, and Menshevik newspapers became a quite 'unanimous chorus of wolves, jackals, and rabid dogs', L. Trotsky quotes his conversation with Vladimir Il'ich:

- The newspapers repeatedly took up the slogan: 'Rob what had been robbed' and churned it up on all possible occasions, in their leading articles, in their poems, and in their correspondence columns.
- "They do stick to that "rob what had been robbed", said Lenin one day in comic despair.
- 'Whose words were they?' I asked, – 'or were they just invented?'

– 'No, somehow I said it myself', answered Lenin. 'I said it and then forgot all about it, and they have made of these words a whole political program'. And, discouraged, he waved his hand in jest.⁶⁸

This 'conversation' has already provoked some responses in our press, which is making a legitimate protest against this depiction of Lenin's attitude to the slogan 'rob what had been robbed'. After this, comrade Trotsky tried to explain this conversation in *Bol'shevik* (no. 12–13).⁶⁹ In his explanations he seemed to approach this little conversation from all angles: political, psychological, linguistic, and finally, factual. Some of these overly extensive and exhaustive 'explanations', which have required a bit of discussion, tell us how much comrade Trotsky had to 'explain' his entire book *Lenin*. L. Trotsky reacts jealously to any doubts expressed about his memory, and does not stint on words or eloquence in explaining this extremely strange conversation with Lenin. If we compare these explanations in *Bol'shevik* with those in the little book *Lenin*, the confusion and contradiction peculiar to Trotsky become especially clear. Essentially Trotsky has one serious argument in support of the 'conversation' quoted by him. In the article in *Bol'shevik*, he explains this conversation with Lenin as having taken place already after the first 'period of Storm and Stress' of the Soviet revolution.⁷⁰ And as evidence of this he quotes Lenin's speech from 29 April 1918.⁷¹ But it is not at all evident from the text of the conversation in the book *Lenin* that this conversation took place six months after the October overthrow. On the contrary this entire section of the chapter 'The Business of Government' deals with a completely different period – the first weeks after the October insurrection. Therefore, for the sake of consistency comrade Trotsky must amend this part of his book *Lenin*, otherwise it gives the impression of duplicitous kowtowing [*poddakivanie*] even if to a Soviet ... philistine.

And so where is comrade Trotsky in the right – is it in the chapter 'The Business of Government' in which Lenin, according to Trotsky, says of the slogan 'rob what had been robbed': 'I said it and then forgot all about it', or is it in the explanatory article in *Bol'shevik* in which comrade Trotsky says that Lenin 'has, of course, not renounced the slogans of the pre-February (1918) period, – including "rob what had been robbed"?'⁷²

68 Trotsky 1971, p. 120 and p. 121.

69 Trotskii 1924h, pp. 98 ff.

70 Trotskii 1924h, p. 100.

71 Ibid. The quotation is from Lenin 1965a, pp. 275–6.

72 Trotskii 1924h, p. 100.

After all, if comrade Trotsky said in *Bol'shevik* that the slogan 'rob what had been robbed' was true in relation to the first period of the October Revolution, and then added quite correctly that this slogan was untrue in relation to the later period of the revolution, then the book *Lenin* has not one mention of the fact that the slogan 'rob what had been robbed' had such a dual meaning (for different eras), as, by the way, does every slogan. And on the other hand, did Lenin ever refer to slogans in this way: 'I said it and then forgot all about it'? No, that was not Lenin. But in the book *Lenin*, Trotsky does not present the slogan 'rob what had been robbed' at all as a slogan used by Lenin in the most spirited era of October to convey the Latin expression 'expropriate the expropriators' to the masses with Russian words. And now, according to comrade Trotsky's recollections, which explain nothing, both Lenin ... and Trotsky brushed off this slogan for some reason. And so this whole conversation leaves us with such an ambiguous impression. Perhaps comrade Trotsky will acknowledge and correct this error?

Contemporary Trotskyism as a Revision of Leninism under the Banner of Lenin

A typical feature of the book *Lenin* is the way it glosses over the author's positions and views. This is evident from the first part 'Lenin and the Old *Iskra*'. It speaks of the period when 'Lenin became the Lenin he was to remain'.⁷³ But it says nothing about the fact that in this same period Trotsky became the Trotsky he was to remain, and moreover, as is now clear, the basic features of Trotsky's political persona were developing at this time. The chapter on the *Iskra* period deals with one of the most important stages in the development of the party, namely the Second Congress of the party. As is well-known, a split occurred at this congress into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, or, as Trotsky writes, 'at the Second Congress, the collaborators of *Iskra* became divided into the *hard* and the *soft*'.

On this L. Trotsky notes: 'One can say that even before the split, before the Congress, Lenin was *hard* and Martov *soft*. And they both knew it'.⁷⁴ It is just really difficult to find in Trotsky's article any kind of clear indications whether Trotsky himself was 'hard' or 'soft' at this time. It is true that at one point Trotsky quotes Lenin's words comparing Martov and Trotsky. Lenin, according

73 Trotsky 1971, p. 31.

74 Trotsky 1971, p. 48.

to L. Trotsky, said: 'On the question of the popular paper, leave Martov to oppose Plekhanov. Martov will muddle up the whole affair – while you will hammer at it. It's better to let it lapse'. But Trotsky added: 'These expressions, "muddle up" and "hammer", I remember clearly'.⁷⁵ And it seems as if Trotsky was not like the 'soft' Martov. Elsewhere Trotsky recalls that Lenin wanted to put him on the editorial board of *Iskra* as the seventh member as an additional counter-weight to G.V. Plekhanov. Once again this creates the impression that Trotsky was with Lenin at that time. But after this, things get completely incomprehensible, at least from Trotsky's chapter 'Lenin and the Old *Iskra*', and several events which take place at the Second Congress of the party are totally inexplicable. Trotsky writes that before the Second Congress 'I (Trotsky) accepted *Iskra* as an entity, and during these months it did not occur to me (I even had an internal animus against it) to look for differences of views, tendencies, for opposing influences either in the paper or among the editors'.⁷⁶ Of course we can only take Trotsky at his word that before the congress the idea of disagreements in *Iskra* had not occurred to him, that the disagreements among the *Iskra*ites at the congress were completely unexpected for him. Nevertheless, the chapter 'Lenin and the Old *Iskra*' was written after all in 1924, and it was written as if Trotsky was with Lenin in the period before the congress. The chapter says nothing about who he (Trotsky) was with at the Second Congress itself, and finally it says nothing about how Trotsky ended up being among Lenin's opponents at this congress, and why he went over to the Mensheviks for many years after that and fought against the Bolsheviks, and first and foremost against Lenin. This entire chapter glosses over the run-up to the Second Congress, and so it is not able to shed any light on why we saw the birth of two parties after the Second Congress, and why Trotsky allied himself for almost the next 15 years with one of these parties, with the Mensheviks. In 1924, we must speak quite openly about this, not by insinuating or by glossing over things, but as a Bolshevik would do it – in a Bolshevik way. Comrade Trotsky speaks more than enough about himself in other places as well, even though the book is in fact called *Lenin*.

But here we are skipping over a 15-year interval. A series of articles appear under the title 'The Revolution'. In the first of these, Trotsky describes how he drew nearer to our party. He describes his first meeting with Lenin after the February Revolution. It says here that at this time Trotsky, at that time still an internationalist unifier, delivers a speech in the name of 'We, Bolsheviks-

75 Trotsky 1971, p. 61.

76 Trotsky 1971, p. 45.

Internationalists [sic], because 'we had a common policy'.⁷⁷ Later, describing the days of the Kornilov affair, Trotsky notes: 'By that time the unifiers [*ob"edenintsy*] had already joined the Bolshevik Party'.⁷⁸ And this is all that Trotsky really says about his move to the Bolshevik Party. Once again, it is striking how there is no clear explanation of how this move happened. It is impossible to ignore the fact that after fifteen years of disagreements with the Bolsheviks, this step by Trotsky had great political significance. And yet instead of explaining this, Trotsky offers a few observations, and some glib assertions.

Elsewhere, in his pamphlet *The New Course*, Trotsky wrote: 'I do not consider the road by which I came to Leninism as less safe and reliable than the others'.⁷⁹ It would be really wonderful if comrade Trotsky would explain not only how he came to the Mensheviks in 1903 but also how he came to the Bolsheviks in 1917? Unfortunately, he does neither.

As we have already said, Trotsky, particularly in his book *Lenin*, says a great deal about Lenin, and arguably no less (!) about himself, and yet he does not deal seriously with these interesting moments of personal political development but glosses over them instead. In the article in *Bol'shevik* in response to comrade Vardin's remarks, Trotsky explains why he deals in the book *Lenin* with those periods when he 'was working with Lenin more closely'. And also, speaking about Lenin and the periods when he diverged from him, Trotsky declares: 'On the basic issue of the long years of disagreements about the party's paths of development, Lenin was completely and utterly right'.⁸⁰ This little and seemingly forthright statement again conceals two larger ambiguities. Here the words 'about the party's paths of development' are a vague way of talking about disagreements which were in essence not confined to even one party, but were disagreements between two parties that had taken opposite sides: on the one hand with the proletariat on the path to socialism, on the other with the bourgeoisie in defence of capitalism. What has been vaguely said here about past disagreements 'about the party's paths of development' is really about the struggle of Bolshevism against Menshevism, about the struggle of revolutionary Marxism against the liberal political agents of the bourgeoisie in the workers' movement. Why would Trotsky not clarify this or speak about it a little less equivocally? A great deal of attention has recently been devoted to this ques-

77 Trotsky 1971, pp. 77, 76.

78 Trotsky 1971, p. 83. The term '*ob"edenintsy*' is translated as 'Inter-Borough Organisation' in this volume. I have used the term 'unifiers' as a more accurate reflection of the discursive practices of the time.

79 Trotsky 1965a, p. 57.

80 *Bol'shevik*, no. 12–13, p. 103 [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1924h, p. 103].

tion in relation to Trotsky's earlier political position. We could only hope that comrade Trotsky would 'utterly and completely', clearly, and without glossing over anything, inform us about this period, even if somewhere else. But we have already noted in the above short phrase 'about the party's paths of development' that comrade Trotsky lets two real ambiguities slip in. The second consists of the fact that Trotsky glosses over the reference to 'paths of development' of the party, that he diverged from Bolshevism not only on questions of how to build the party but also on basic questions of revolutionary tactics, on the evaluation of our revolution. Incidentally, these latter disagreements too should be listed among the basic 'disagreements of many years'. Unfortunately, 'The Lessons of October' once again confirmed that Trotsky's disagreements with the Bolsheviks on this issue are not only not over, but that even today Trotsky has an erroneous, anti-Bolshevik position. Lenin pointed out repeatedly the error in the position of the supporters of the so-called 'permanent revolution'. This Leninist criticism of 'permanent revolution' has recently revealed again and again the fallaciousness of this semi-Menshevik political line.

As we have been reminded now in the press, Lenin, taking the example of the events of the 1917 Revolution, again underlined the fallaciousness of the position of the *permanentschiki*. Trotsky knows and remembers this. He recalls in 'The Lessons of October' how 'Lenin sometimes said that the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', and Peasants' Deputies in the first period of the February Revolution did to a certain degree embody the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. And this', – L. Trotsky concedes,

was true insofar as these Soviets generally embodied power. But as Lenin explained repeatedly, the Soviets of the February period embodied only half the power [*poluvlast'*] ... It was precisely in this democratic amorphousness of the half-powerful coalition of workers, peasants and soldiers that the instability of the conciliationist [*soglashatel'skie*] Soviets resided. They either had to cease to exist, or take power into their hands for real. But they could not take power as a democratic coalition of workers and peasants represented by various parties, but only as a dictatorship of the proletariat led by a single party and carrying the peasant masses along with it, beginning with their semi-proletarian strata. In other words, a democratic worker-peasant coalition could take shape only as an immature form that had not advanced to real power. It was a tendency, not a fact.⁸¹

81 L. Trotskii, Soch., v. III, 1917, part 1. 'Uroki Oktiabria', pp. xx–xxi [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1924d, pp. xx–xxi; Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 94–5].

While he did not name Lenin here but in fact covered himself in his name, Trotsky was engaging in a sharp polemic with him on the basic questions of how to evaluate the revolution and revolutionary tactics. Recently, one of his old, fundamental mistakes, repeated here by Trotsky, has been investigated: the erroneous underestimation and incorrect rejection of the revolutionary role of the peasantry in our revolution. But it is important that we note here how comrade Trotsky himself, in those same 'Lessons of October', in fact impugns his own permanent mistake, repeated in the words quoted above. Here is what he himself says on the penultimate page of 'The Lessons of October': 'When our party demanded that the Soviets, led by the Mensheviks and SRs, seize power, it by definition "demanded" a ministry made up of Peshekhonovs: in the final analysis there are no differences of principle at all among Peshekhonov, Chernov, and Dan, and they were all equally useful for facilitating the transfer of power from the bourgeoisie to the proletariat. [...] A dozen Peshekhonovs meant a government made up of a dozen representatives of petty-bourgeois democracy instead of a coalition'.⁸² And L. Trotsky concludes this later on: *'There was no special (!) political line here, – it was the same line that Lenin had formulated more than once'* (our emphasis. v.m.).⁸³ What do we get from comrade Trotsky? It might be possible to conclude from the last phrase that he was in complete agreement with Lenin, but merely wanted to emphasise that there was no 'special line' there. What would this mean? Comrade Trotsky was surely aware of Lenin's articles in 1917 in which he persistently and resolutely condemned the viewpoint of the 'permanent revolution' and used as an example our party's proposal to the then Menshevik-SR CEC to take power into its hands and seat 'a dozen Peshekhonovs' in the ministry. Lenin and our party took to its logical conclusion our own, so to speak, quite particular point of view on the dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. How is it possible to agree with this policy of the party, how is it possible to show solidarity with Lenin, if we never agreed with the position of the 'permanentchiki', *and yet say at the same time that the position of the 'permanentchiki' was correct?* This example shows us once again how comrade Trotsky assiduously glosses over things and how his politics are shamelessly [*bezbozhno*] muddled. His political past, his Trotskyism, continues to weigh on him, even now impeding his ability to stand

82 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 137. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'Maybe Peshekhonov knew statistics a little better and made a more business-like impression than Tsereteli or Chernov'.

83 L. Trotsky, Soch., v. III, 1917, part 1. 'Uroki Oktiabria', p. LXVI [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1924d, p. lxvi; Trotsky, Document 1, p. 137].

with both feet on the bedrock of correct, Bolshevik policy. Even in 1924 he is completely unable to give up his basic, semi-Menshevik error of the past: his underestimation of the revolutionary role of the peasantry. Even though now he can offer no real objection to the policy of our party in 1917, even more than this: he justifies our policy at that time, all the while maintaining his own view of 'permanent revolution' which was firmly condemned by the party, and especially by Lenin, both before the revolution and in 1917.

Trotsky is not a new political figure. He has gone through a number of stages, in complete or partial alliance with the Mensheviks. Comrade Lenin described these stages repeatedly in his articles. In the Bolshevik journal *Prosveshchenie* [*Enlightenment*] in 1914, for example, Lenin succinctly captured Trotsky's political development over the whole period from the start of the 1900s to 1914. In this article, Lenin provided a devastating evaluation of Trotsky's 'special' course: 'Trotsky has never yet held a firm opinion on any important question of Marxism. He always contrives to "worm his way into the cracks" of any given difference of opinion, and desert one side for the other'.⁸⁴ It appeared, after his break with the Mensheviks and his entry into the Bolshevik Party, that this period was finally over. Comrade Trotsky's latest speeches, however, compel us to recall some of Lenin's early characterisations.

It is important for us to point out here that since Trotsky has been in our party for the past seven years of the revolution, he has also had, so to speak, his own 'special' party history. If earlier, in 1914, Lenin felt it necessary to reiterate the history of Trotsky's political development to the younger generation of workers, then it is even more necessary now to describe the history of L. Trotsky's political development over these years of revolution for the current generation of workers and for the new strata of workers. This latter period of development, as Trotsky's present literary works show, is intertwined with Trotsky's political past. During these years of revolution, Trotsky, now in the ranks of our party, passed through all the stages the party had gone through, but while doing so Trotsky tried to take his own position on a range of truly fundamental moments of the revolution, a position that was separate from that of the majority of the party and especially of Lenin. However, Trotsky's 'special' position did not turn out to be correct on any of the questions on which he differed from Lenin.

It began in January–February 1918, in the Brest period. We have already said what the error was at that time. In 1921, during the transition to NEP, comrade Trotsky came out in support of accelerating the actual nationalisation

84 VI. Lenin, *Sobr. Soch.*, v. XIII, part 2, p. 537 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1964z, pp. 447–8].

of trade unions at that moment when the revolution was confronting us with a quite different task, namely the transition to a product tax (*prodnalog*), to greater freedom of trade, and to the establishment of well-known forms of state capitalism and, in connection with this, to new tasks for the trade unions, tasks which were in keeping with a very different line than the line of Trotsky and the Trotskyists. Later, Trotsky became a special defender of the so-called 'planned approach' in the economic sphere. He bitterly and relentlessly criticised the Central Committee of the party for underestimating the importance of the economic plan and coined the slogan 'economic plan' as if it were his special slogan, having not foreseen or noticed that the currency reform, which was being prepared at that time and was later put into effect by the party under the leadership of its Central Committee, was the basic and most important element for introducing planning into our economy. The champion of the economic plan, who lavished a great deal of time and pompous phrases on this idea in his articles, speeches, and special appeals to the CC, always just 'forgot' to speak and write about the currency reform, about this basic foundation of the economic plan. Despite comrade Trotsky's unforgettable 'forgetfulness', the party and the CC felt their way and took the only correct path to make sure that the principles for carrying out the state planning of economic life were in place.

Last year, comrade Trotsky was the instigator and leader of the party discussion. At that time he held back nothing in his negative characterisation of the party. We all remember the discussion, and, despite the predictions of the opposition, it ended with the 'Lenin Levy' when two hundred thousands workers poured into our party, and into their own Leninist party. And this happened in an atmosphere of extraordinary empathy for the party among the truly broad masses of the workers and at the same time in an atmosphere of complete moral collapse of the petty-bourgeois opposition in the party, i.e. the political failure of Trotsky and his supporters.

In recent months the speeches by Trotsky from his own 'special' viewpoint have not only become more frequent on internal party matters. The 'radius of confusion', to put it in Trotsky's terms, and the number of big political mistakes made by Trotsky have increased. The attempt to adhere to his own 'special', Trotskyist position means that Trotsky is isolating himself inside the party, separating himself from its basic cadres, and this should be a most serious warning to him.

The party values Trotsky, it knows his great importance and his revolutionary service in past years, but it cannot ignore all of the cumulative political errors he has made recently. These errors compel the party to be on guard particularly against efforts to revive Trotskyism. The party knows that some Bolsheviks, some Mensheviks have tried to bring back the old Trotskyism. The party is well-

aware, however, that there is no Bolshevism in Trotskyism, that it has always been 'completely and utterly' antithetical to our party and remains so. Contemporary Trotskyism is as antithetical to Leninism as was the old Trotskyism. The 'new' in Trotskyism is nothing more than the holdovers and vestiges of Menshevism. Leninism, like Marxism, is valuable and necessary to the proletariat as complete, internally unified teachings about the tasks of the party in the age of the proletarian revolution and as a consistently revolutionary politics of the workers' party in the age of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The revision of Leninism with Trotskyism contradicts the consistently revolutionary spirit of Leninism in the same way that earlier efforts by revisionists to revise and correct revolutionary Marxism contradicted the essence of Marx's teachings. If contemporary Trotskyism is endeavouring somehow to gloss over the difference between Trotskyism and Leninism, if contemporary Trotskyism is endeavouring to justify Trotskyism in any way against Leninism, this can only be seen as a malignant assault, whatever the personal intent. This revision of Leninism, this exploitation of Lenin, cannot take place under the banner of Leninism. Political duplicity and obfuscation of ideological positions are also antithetical to Leninism.

There are now many practical matters, many urgent tasks, on which the party is of one mind, just as it is of one mind about its entire foundation, about the evaluation of its revolutionary paths and political prospects. In this sense, the party does not need this discussion, and therefore does not want it. However, it is absolutely necessary for the party now to explain the principles of Leninism in light of the new and old errors of Trotskyism. Attempts to revive Trotskyism as an ideological trend must be firmly rebuffed. Such attempts can only be regarded as an opportunistic revision of Leninism. The organisations which have been developing in the years of the revolution are now following the path of Leninism with great profit, and in particular the study of the Trotskyist errors of the past and present must help the education and political growth of the true Leninists in our party. Trotsky numbers himself among the Leninists. The book *Lenin*, which we have mostly concentrated upon here, would therefore be the best proof of this. But the errors, fallaciousness, and distortions in the book *Lenin*, in its characterisation of the leader of our party and of the party itself, are so blatant and flagrant that comrade Trotsky instead proves the opposite with this book. In this book, just as in 'The Lessons of October' and in *The New Course*, comrade Trotsky's errors heavily outweigh the positive aspects: the Trotskyist in Trotsky holds sway over the Leninist. The book *Lenin* – according to Trotsky – provides notes for Lenin's biographer. But the political biographers of Lenin will and must write not so much on the basis of such marred and politically tendentious booklets as comrade Trotsky's *Lenin*,

as on the basis of those most valuable and completely undistorted documents left for us by the remarkable history of the pre-revolutionary and revolutionary years.

This little book *Lenin*, and also 'The Lessons of October' and *The New Course*, provide material for a description of the duplicity of Trotsky's current political position and, by the same token, material about the lessons of Trotskyism.

The Chkheidze Controversy¹

‘L.D. Trotskii – N.S. Chkheidze’²

Vienna, 1 April 1913, N. Trotskii to St. Petersburg, Tauride Palace, to the member of the State Duma Nikolai Semenovich Chkheidze.

Dear Nikolai Semenovich!

First, let me extend my gratitude to you for not only the political but also the aesthetic satisfaction one gets from your speeches, and in particular from your recent speech on hooliganism. And in general it must be said: the soul rejoices when one reads the speeches of our deputies, the letters from workers to the editors of *Luch* [Beam], or when one registers the facts of the labour movement. The wretched squabbling which is systematically provoked by that old hand, Lenin, that professional exploiter [*ekspluatator*] of all that is backward in the Russian labour movement, seems like such a senseless obsession. Not a single mentally undamaged European socialist believes that a split will happen because of the phony disagreements [*margarinnovye raznoglasii*] Lenin is manufacturing in Krakow.

Lenin’s ‘successes’ in themselves, however much of a drag they exerted, do not cause any misgivings in me. It is not 1903 now, nor is it 1908. With ‘dark money’ seized from Kautsky and [Clara] Zetkin, Lenin set up a newspaper, appropriated the name of a popular newspaper for it,³ and, having put ‘unity’ and ‘unofficial’ in its banner, attracted worker readers who naturally saw the very appearance of a daily workers’ newspaper as an enormous achievement. And later, when the newspaper had become established, Lenin used it to foment circle [*kruzhkovye*] intrigues and unprincipled splitting. However, the workers’ spontaneous attraction to unity is so irresistible that Lenin had to play cat-and-mouse [*igrat’ v priatki*] systematically with his readers, talk about unity from below while engineering a split from above, and relegate the idea of class

1 This consists of a letter sent by Trotsky to Chkheidze in 1913, a letter from Trotsky to Ol'minskii in 1921 pertaining to possible publication of this letter, and Ol'minskii's reply to Trotsky in 1924. Ol'minskii and Trotsky refer to multiple letters, but only one has been found.

2 *Lenin o Trotskom* 1925, pp. 217–19.

3 See *Pravda* and *Vienna Pravda* in the glossary.

struggle below circle and factional ideas. In short, the entire edifice of Leninism at the present time is built on lies and falsification and contains the poisonous seeds of its own destruction. There can be no doubt that the question of unity or schism hinges on the sensible behaviour of the other side – for a brutal disintegration will begin in the near future among the Leninists.

I repeat: it will depend on the sensible behaviour of the other side. And if Leninism in itself does not cause much apprehension, I should nonetheless acknowledge that I am not at all certain that our liquidator friends will not once again help Lenin to adjust his position and sit more firmly in the saddle.

There are two possible policies now: the ideological and organisational destruction of the very principles of Leninism, which are not consistent with the party political organisation of the workers but which thrive beautifully on the manure of factional divisions. Or on the other hand, the factional selection of anti-Leninists (or Mensheviks, or liquidators) through the thorough liquidation of tactical disagreements. A good number of Mensheviks – the most conservative – are inclined to this second tactic. And this, in my view, is the main danger.

As far as I know the mood of the majority of the duma fraction, it seems to me to be the salvation for party development at the present time. But I think that this majority has not done enough to let the party know its views on the party crisis. The corresponding actions of the fraction (the resolution on collaboration in both organs and so on) were very important, but still episodic. In the chaos that *Pravda* is stirring up around the fraction, the individual disappears for broad circles (of the fraction) ... It must declare with decisive authority that it continues to stand up for certain internal tasks (i.e. above all unity) and is not prepared at all to be passive material for 'circle' experiments. An appropriate manifesto from the fraction would meet with the most animated response from broad workers' circles and would immediately transform the fraction into a focus of all progressive and active SDs.

But most important is another constant task – the vigilant supervision of *Luch*. For the past two or three months, the work of *Luch* has been trivial and carping Polonism, a zeal in part for the formal defence of the platform instead of its political application; a defence of the authority of the August conference – of all former liquidationism and even the identification of *Luch* and of a majority of the duma fraction with liquidationism – this really helped Lenin to demoralise the party and destroy the fraction and *Luch* became the banner causing so much trouble in this way. And this trouble affected not only the newspaper but the fraction as well, for the workers do not know the editors, but they do know that the eight deputies who have declared their

own solidarity with the platform of *Luch* are responsible for the newspaper. If all of the above is taken into consideration, then it must be said that the most important precondition for success in building SD is now the more active 'internal' policy of a majority of the Duma fraction. Active not in the sense of interference in a trivial squabble (God forbid), but in the sense of 1) a decisive presentation of its 'vademecum' – in the form, for example, of a manifesto on the pages of *Luch*, and 2) a vigilant supervision of *Luch*, with the aim of completely rooting out 'atavistic' political methods in the organ which must be the organ of the fraction – for I am not at all sure that there will not be, tomorrow or the day after, a new 'lurch to the side', and such a lurch would be a salvation for Lenin and fatal for all of us.

In particular, for agitational purposes the fraction could adopt the German initiative to unify the SDs. If you could personally be in Berlin at Easter, this would be very useful in every sense (and especially for the Caucasus SDs).

I wish you all success and warmly shake your hand.

N. Trotskii

'M. Ol'minskii's introduction to the recently published book *Lenin on Trotsky and Trotskyism*'⁴

Three years ago, I received the following letter from comrade Trotsky:

Dear Mikhail Stepanovich!

Please excuse the lateness of this reply. This has been a very busy week for me. You ask about publishing my letters to Chkhaidze. I do not think that this would be appropriate. The time for history has not yet come. The letters were written in the heat of the moment and its demands, and the tone of the letters was in keeping with that. Today's reader will not understand this tone, will not appreciate the necessary historical manoeuvrings, and will only get confused. The archive of the party and the foreign Marxist publications must be obtained from abroad. They contain a large number of letters from everyone who took part in the various 'scraps [*draki*]'. Surely you are not intending to publish them

4 'Predislovie M. Ol'minskogo k vykhodiashchei na-dniakh knige Lenin o Trotskom i trotskizme', *Pravda*, no. 280, 9 December 1924, p. 2; also published in *Izvestiia*, no. 282, 10 December 1924, p. 4. This includes a letter from Trotsky to Ol'minskii dated 6 December 1921, and Ol'minskii's comment. It was reprinted in *Lenin o Trotskom* 1925, pp. 3–6.

now? This would create completely unnecessary political difficulties, for there are scarcely two old émigrés in the party who did not sharply rebuke each other in their correspondence under the influence of an ideological dispute, a passing grievance, and so on.

Should I write an explanation for my letters? But this would mean talking about what kept me away from the Bolsheviks at that time. In the preface to my pamphlet *Results and Prospects*,⁵ I speak of this briefly. I do not think it necessary to reiterate this just because the letters were discovered by chance in the files of the Department of Police. I must also add that any look back at the factional struggle might trigger a polemic today, for – I am being very sincere here – I in no way believe that I was wrong about everything in my disagreements with the Bolsheviks. I was wrong – and fundamentally so – in my evaluation of the Menshevik faction, because I overestimated its revolutionary potential and hoped to be able to isolate and nullify the right wing in it. The fundamental mistake derived, though, from the fact that I approached both factions – the Bolshevik and the Menshevik – from the viewpoint of the permanent revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat, at a time when both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks were adopting the viewpoint of the bourgeois revolution and the democratic republic. I believed that the disagreements of principle between the two factions were not so deep, and I hoped (I expressed this hope repeatedly in my letters and reports) that the course of the revolution itself would bring both factions to the viewpoint of the permanent revolution and the conquest of power by the working class, something which happened in part in 1905. (Comrade Lenin's introduction to Kautsky's article on the motive forces of the Russian Revolution,⁶ and the entire political line of the newspaper *Nachalo*).

I consider my evaluation of the motive forces of the revolution to have been indisputably correct, just as the conclusions I drew from them about both factions were indisputably incorrect. Only Bolshevism was able to concentrate within its ranks, thanks to its implacable political line, the truly revolutionary elements both of the old intelligentsia and of the advanced stratum of the working class. Only because Bolshevism managed to create this organisation, forged in revolution, did such a quick shift from a revolutionary democratic position to a revolutionary socialist one turn out to be possible.

And now I could easily divide my polemical articles against the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks into two categories: some were devoted to an analysis of the

5 Trotsky 1965b, pp. 161–7.

6 Lenin 1965i, pp. 408–13.

internal forces of the revolution, its perspectives (Rosa Luxemburg's theoretical Polish organ, *Neue Zeit*), and others were devoted to an evaluation of the factions of the Russian Social Democrats, their struggle and so forth. I could republish the articles in the former category without any corrections, as they completely and utterly mesh with the position of our party from 1917 onwards. The articles in the latter category are clearly erroneous, and it would not be worth reprinting them. Two letters that were sent belong in this latter category, and their publication would be ill-timed. Let somebody do this in ten years, if they are still of interest at that time.

With communist greetings.

L. Trotsky

6 December 1921

[Comment from Ol'minskii]

Much could be said about this letter. I would like to dwell on only one aspect here. Comrade Trotsky's letters to Chkheidze, as the reader can see here, were not the result of their author's passing mood, but came from times of political struggle between the Bolsheviks and the liquidators (i.e. the conciliationists). At that time, the Bolsheviks were publishing the newspaper *Pravda*, under the leadership of comrade Lenin, and the liquidators (conciliationists) were publishing the newspaper *Luch*. Comrade Trotsky was one of the founders and inspirations of the conciliationist newspaper, which fought both against *Pravda* and against the revolutionary manifestations of the workers' movement. To equate this struggle with the 'scraps' abroad (even in quotation marks) merely shows that for comrade Trotsky too the party was merely an object over which the 'leaders' were fighting. The leaders did not serve the movement and the party, rather the party and the revolutionary workers' movement served, in comrade Trotsky's view, the designs and intrigue of the leaders. In a word, I say directly that a clear disdain for the party shines through in this short letter to me which has turned up quite by chance.

Is this an accident? The book on 1917 tells the reader how this revolutionary year was seen through comrade Trotsky's eyes: once again – almost exclusively about the 'leaders', and only minimally about the party.

I recently had to re-read the literature which appeared after the party's first split – the literature of 1904. At that time the Menshevik 'leaders' disdain for the 'gallery', for the party masses, was visible – a disdain which went hand-in-hand with demagoguery and with a deferential attitude towards bourgeois 'society' – today's 'fellow-travellers'. For an analogy to this, take comrade Trotsky's feuil-

letons in defence of 'fellow-travellers' in *Pravda* in September 1923,⁷ which were so polemical that comrade Trotsky even used the jargon of the Menshevik *Iskra* of 1904.

Where did this disdain for the party come from? We know that the Mensheviks were conciliationists the whole time. And the Bolsheviks fought against conciliationism. But comrade Trotsky? He went along with some people, then with others, i.e. stood apart from these and those, moved from camp to camp. Where will comrade Trotsky go in the future – that is unclear. And what will he do – we must be ready for this.

The present book provides as far as possible a digest of what comrade Lenin said and wrote about Trotsky. It is an incomplete digest. After all, whatever comrade Lenin said about the Mensheviks and about the right wing of the Mensheviks – about the liquidators, the recallists – applied equally to comrade Trotsky as well. On the other hand, whatever was printed in the press that came out under comrade Lenin's leadership, even if written by other authors, expressed comrade Lenin's opinion, for he did not let through a single article he had not approved.

Comrade Trotsky must be 'studied' not only from his collected works but also from what he deems unnecessary to include in this collection, so that we can be on our guard concerning comrade Trotsky's reversals.

M. Ol'minskii

7 A reference to a series of articles examining proletarian art and revolutionary culture, see L. Trotskii, 'Proletarskaia kul'tura i proletarskoe iskusstvo', *Pravda*, no. 207, 14 September 1923, pp. 2–3 and no. 208, 15 September, 1923, pp. 2–3; L. Trotskii, 'Futurizm', *Pravda*, no. 216, 25 September 1923, pp. 2–4 and no. 217, 26 September 1923, pp. 2–3; L. Trotskii, 'Iskusstvo revoliutsii i sotsialisticheskoe iskusstvo', *Pravda*, no. 220, 29 September 1923, pp. 2–3 and no. 221, 30 September 1923, p. 2. Much of this appears in Trotsky 2005.

‘The Question of the Lessons of October’¹

N. Krupskaya

Two years ago at the plenum of the Moscow Soviet, Vladimir Il'ich said that we had started out on the practical road, that we had started to approach socialism not merely as an image dressed up in festive colours. ‘We need to take the right direction’, he said, ‘we need to see that everything is checked, that the masses, the entire population, check the path we follow and say: “Yes, this is better than the old system”’.² This is the task we have set ourselves.

Our party, a small group of people compared with the entire population of the country, embraced this task. From this seed came the task of changing everything, and everything is changing. We have already shown that this is not a utopia, but a cause people live by. We have all seen that this is being done. We have had to do it in such a way that the great majority of the toiling masses, peasants and workers said: ‘It is not you who praise yourselves, but we. We say that you have achieved splendid results, after which no intelligent person will ever dream of returning to the old’ (v. XVIII, part 2, p. 107).³

The party is working without respite. In 1924, the success of the Lenin Levy showed us that the working masses recognises the party as their own. This means something, this is a serious and real achievement, and no small praise in itself. In the countryside as well, we are starting to get some praise although still very limited. The party has turned its face towards the village, and not only towards the village, but to its poor and middle strata, and is working to improve the grass-roots Soviet apparatus so that it can help the village cells, and hopefully this will achieve a great deal. The party is leading the masses through all kinds of practical work on an enormous scale and guiding the wheel of history along the path that Lenin wanted to take the country.

The party has embarked seriously on a practical path – a very difficult path under our conditions, and for this reason the party is so hostile to any kinds of discussions. This is why comrade Trotsky’s speech on the last barricade seemed

¹ N. Krupskaya, ‘K voprosu ob urokakh Oktiabria’, *Pravda*, no. 286, 16 December 1924, p. 2.

² Lenin 1966e, p. 442.

³ Ibid.

so strange to the Thirteenth Congress. And this is why comrade Trotsky's latest 'literary' effort now arouses such indignation.

I do not know whether comrade Trotsky is guilty of all of the mortal sins he has been accused of – the matter is not without polemical passion. Comrade Trotsky does not need to complain about this. He was not born yesterday and he knows that an article written in the tone of *The Lessons of October* was bound to provoke a similar tone in the ensuing polemic. But this is not the issue. The issue is that comrade Trotsky, calling on us to study *The Lessons of October*, does not lay down the correct guidelines to do so. He proposes that we study the role of this or that individual in October, the role of this or that tendency in the CC, etc. But it is not necessary to study that.

The first thing we must study is the international situation as it existed in October, the relations between the class forces in Russia at that time.

Is comrade Trotsky calling on us to do this? No. But without the deepest analysis of the historical moment, without a consideration of the actual forces and their interrelationship, victory would have been impossible. A defining feature of Leninism is the application of the Marxist revolutionary dialectic to the concrete conditions of the current moment, and the evaluation of that moment not just from the standpoint of a given country but on a world scale. The international experience of the past decade has been the best confirmation of the correctness of this approach. This approach must be taught to the Communist Parties of all countries, this approach must be taught to the younger generation that is studying October.

Comrade Trotsky somehow overlooks this question. Speaking of Germany and Bulgaria, he spends little time evaluating the moment. If we look at the events through his eyes – events look like they can be easily channelled. Marxist analysis was never comrade Trotsky's strong suit.

This is why he underestimates the role of the peasantry. A lot has already been written about this.

Furthermore, we must study the party during October. Comrade Trotsky says a great deal about the party, but for him the party is the corps of leaders, the leading personnel. But whoever wants to study October should study the party as it existed in October. The party was a living organism, in which the CC (the 'headquarters') was not cut off from the party masses, the organism in which the members of the CC spoke every day with the members of the grass-roots organisations. Comrades Sverdlov and Stalin knew very well what was going on in every district of Petrograd, what was going on in the provinces, what was going on in the army. Il'ich too knew this, despite the fact that he was living in the underground. He received many letters, letters about everything that was happening in the life of the organisation. And Il'ich knew not only how to listen

but also how to read, often between the lines. Victory was possible precisely because a tight bond existed between the CC and the organisation as a whole.

A party in which the leaders were cut off from the organisation could never have been victorious. All communist parties must clearly recognise this and organise themselves accordingly.

When the party is so organised, when the headquarters knows – and not only by resolutions – the will of the organisation as a whole and abides by it, the vacillations and mistakes by individual members cease to have the decisive significance which comrade Trotsky ascribes to them. When history confronts the party with a completely new, unprecedented situation, it is only natural that this situation will not be uniformly appreciated by everyone, and then it is up to the organisation to work out a common political line.

Il'ich always attached enormous significance to the party organisation as a whole. His attitude to the party congresses comes from this. He brought to these congresses everything that he had thought out since the last congress. Where disagreements existed (the question of the Brest Peace), he appealed to the congress, because he saw himself primarily responsible to the congress, to the organisation as a whole.

Comrade Trotsky does not understand the role of the party as a whole, and the role of the party bond across the entire political line. For him, the party is synonymous with its headquarters. Let us take an example: 'What does the bolshevisation of Communist parties mean?', he writes in *The Lessons of October*. 'It means educating them in their selection of leadership personnel so that they will not drift along on the current when the time comes for their own October'.⁴ This purely 'administrative' viewpoint is utterly specious. Yes, the 'leadership' personnel is extremely important, and the headquarters must be filled with the most talented, the best, and the most seasoned people; it is not merely a matter of their personal qualities but of how closely the staff is bound up with the organisation as a whole.

And there is one more factor to which we owe our victory in October: that is the correct evaluation of the role and significance of the masses. Read everything that Vladimir Il'ich has written about the role of the masses in the revolution and in the building of socialism, and you will see that Lenin's estimation of the role of the masses is one of the cornerstones of Leninism. To Lenin, the masses are never a means to an end; they are the deciding factor. If the party is to lead millions of people, it must be close to these masses, it must understand their lives, suffering, and aspirations. Bela Kun relates

4 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 136.

the following: when he began to tell Il'ich about a revolutionary war against Germany, Il'ich replied: 'I do not think you are just a talker, go to the front tomorrow and see whether the masses of soldiers are ready for a revolutionary war'.⁵ Bela Kun went, and he saw that Lenin was right.

In *The Lessons of October* we do not find any call to study this aspect of the October Revolution. On the contrary, when he is evaluating the events in Germany, comrade Trotsky underestimates the passivity of the masses.

A certain Syrkin has come up with a ridiculous interpretation of John Reed's book.⁶ Some people think that we should not put John Reed's book into the hands of any more young people. It contains inaccuracies, legends. That is true. It is impossible to study the history of the party on the basis of John Reed. Why then did Lenin recommend this book so strongly? Because this is not the focus of John Reed's book. John Reed provides a splendid and artistic description of the psychology, the mood of the soldier and worker masses who carried out the October Revolution, and of the impotence of the bourgeoisie and its flunkies. The young communist grasps the spirit of the revolution more quickly and deeply from reading John Reed than from perusing dozens of resolutions and protocols. Our youth must not only know the history of the party, it is no less important to feel the pulse of the October Revolution, its spirit. How will our young people become Leninists if they know nothing more than the narrow party situation, and do not feel what war, what revolution meant!

Comrade Trotsky's approach to the study of October is wrong. The incorrect evaluation of October is one step away from the incorrect evaluation of reality, from the incorrect approach to a whole range of issues of the most immediate significance. The incorrect evaluation of reality is one step away from incorrect decisions and actions. Everyone can understand this.

There is no getting away from it. As *The Lessons of October* has appeared in print, it must be comprehensively discussed in the pages of the press and in the party organisations. This must be done in a way that is accessible to all members of the party.

Our party has now greatly increased in numbers; broad masses of workers are joining it, for whom those questions raised by comrade Trotsky are not sufficiently clear. What is clear to an Old Bolshevik who fought stubbornly for the Leninist line is often unclear to the new party member. The Leninists in particular must never say the following: discussing this question stops us from

⁵ I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

⁶ Reed 1982.

learning. It is precisely by discussing this question that a deeper understanding of Leninism can be acquired.

During the decisive years of the revolution, Comrade Trotsky devoted all his energies to the struggle for Soviet power. He courageously took up a difficult and responsible post. He displayed colossal energy and enormous intensity to safeguard victory for the revolutionary cause. The party will not forget this.

But the achievements of October have not yet been fully secured, and we must continue to work tenaciously to carry out the tasks raised by October. It would be dangerous, it would be disastrous to turn away from the historically tested path of Leninism. And when a comrade like Trotsky takes the path, perhaps even unconsciously, of revising Leninism – the party must have its say.

‘The October Revolution and the Tactics of Russian Communists’¹

I. Stalin

The External and Internal Setting for the October Revolution

Three circumstances of an external nature determined the comparative ease with which the proletarian revolution in Russia succeeded in breaking the chains of imperialism and thus overthrowing the rule of the bourgeoisie.

Firstly, the circumstance that the October Revolution began in a period of desperate struggle between the two principal imperialist groups, the Anglo-French and the Austro-German; at a time when, engaged in mortal struggle between themselves, these two groups had neither the time nor the means to devote serious attention to the struggle against the October Revolution. This circumstance was of tremendous importance for the October Revolution; for it enabled it to take advantage of the fierce conflicts within the imperialist world to strengthen and organise its own forces.

Secondly, the circumstance that the October Revolution began during the imperialist war, at a time when the labouring masses, exhausted by the war and thirsting for peace, were by the very logic of facts led up to the proletarian revolution as the only way out of the war. This circumstance was of extreme importance for the October Revolution; for it put into its hands the mighty weapon of peace, made it easier for it to link the Soviet revolution with the ending of the hated war, and thus created mass sympathy for it both in the West, among the workers, and in the East, among the oppressed peoples.

Thirdly, the existence of a powerful working-class movement in Europe and the fact that a revolutionary crisis was maturing in the West and in the East, brought on by the protracted imperialist war. This circumstance was of ines-

¹ I. Stalin, ‘Oktiabr’skaia revoliutsiia i taktika russkikh kommunistov’, in *Na putiakh*, 1925, pp. vii–xlvi. This article is dated 17 December 1924, pp. vii–xlvi. It is a slightly enlarged version of the following: I. Stalin, ‘Oktiabr’ i teoriia permanentnoi revoliutsii tov. Trotskogo’, *Pravda*, no. 290, 20 December 1924, p. 5, and simultaneously in *Izvestiia*, no. 291, 20 December 1924, p. 5. I have used the translation from Stalin 1953c [from the online version at <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1924/12.htm>].

timable importance for the revolution in Russia, for it ensured the revolution's faithful allies outside Russia in its struggle against world imperialism.

But in addition to circumstances of an external nature, there were also a number of favourable internal conditions which facilitated the victory of the October Revolution.

Of these conditions, the following must be regarded as the chief ones:

Firstly, the October Revolution enjoyed the most active support of the overwhelming majority of the working class in Russia.

Secondly, it enjoyed the undoubted support of the poor peasants and of the majority of the soldiers, who were thirsting for peace and land.

Thirdly, it had at its head, as its guiding force, such a tried and tested party as the Bolshevik Party, strong not only by reason of its experience and discipline acquired through the years, but also by reason of its vast connections with the labouring masses.

Fourthly, the October Revolution was confronted by enemies who were comparatively easy to overcome, such as the rather weak Russian bourgeoisie, a landlord class which was utterly demoralised by peasant 'revolts', and the compromising parties (the Mensheviks and SRs), which had become completely bankrupt during the war.

Fifthly, it had at its disposal the vast expanses of the young state, in which it was able to manoeuvre freely, retreat when circumstances so required, enjoy a respite, gather strength, etc.

Sixthly, in its struggle against counter-revolution, the October Revolution could count upon sufficient resources of food, fuel and raw materials within the country.

The combination of these external and internal circumstances created that peculiar situation which determined the comparative ease with which the October Revolution won its victory.

This does not mean, of course, that there were no unfavourable features in the external and internal setting of the October Revolution. Think of such an unfavourable feature as, for example, the isolation, to some extent, of the October Revolution, the absence near it, or bordering on it, of a Soviet country on which it could rely for support. Undoubtedly, the future revolution, for example, in Germany, will be in a more favourable situation in this respect, for it has in close proximity a powerful Soviet country like our Soviet Union. I need not mention so unfavourable a feature of the October Revolution as the absence of a proletarian majority within the country.

But these unfavourable features only emphasise the tremendous importance of the peculiar internal and external conditions of the October Revolution of which I have spoken above.

These peculiar conditions must not be lost sight of for a single moment. They must be borne in mind particularly in analysing the events of the autumn of 1923 in Germany. Above all, they should be borne in mind by Trotsky, who draws an unfounded analogy between the October Revolution and the revolution in Germany, and lashes violently at the German Communist Party for its actual and alleged mistakes. 'It was easy for Russia', says Lenin,

in the specific and historically unique situation of 1917, to start the socialist revolution, but it will be more difficult for Russia than for the European countries to continue the revolution and bring it to its consummation. I had occasion to point this out already at the beginning of 1918, and our experience of the past two years has entirely confirmed the correctness of this view. Certain specific conditions, viz., (1) the possibility of linking up the Soviet revolution with the ending, as a consequence of this revolution, of the imperialist war, which had exhausted the workers and peasants to an incredible degree; (2) the possibility of taking temporary advantage of the mortal conflict between the world's two most powerful groups of imperialist robbers, who were unable to unite against their Soviet enemy; (3) the possibility of enduring a comparatively lengthy civil war, partly owing to the enormous size of the country and to the poor means of communication; (4) the existence of such a profound bourgeois-democratic revolutionary movement among the peasantry that the party of the proletariat was able to adopt the revolutionary demands of the peasant party (the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, the majority of whose members were definitely hostile to Bolshevism) and realise them at once, thanks to the conquest of political power by the proletariat – all these specific conditions do not at present exist in Western Europe, and a repetition of such or similar conditions will not occur so easily. Incidentally, apart from a number of other causes, that is why it is more difficult for Western Europe to *start* a socialist revolution than it was for us.

see *Detskaia bolezнь*, v. XVII, p. 153²

These words of Lenin's should not be forgotten.

2 Lenin 1966b, p. 64.

Two Specific Features of the October Revolution, or October and Comrade Trotsky's Theory of Permanent Revolution

There are two specific features of the October Revolution which must be understood first of all if we are to comprehend the inner meaning and the historical significance of that revolution.

What are these features?

Firstly, the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat was born in our country as a power which came into existence on the basis of an alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry, the latter being led by the proletariat. Secondly, the fact that the dictatorship of the proletariat became established in our country as a result of the victory of socialism in one country – a country in which capitalism was little developed – while capitalism was preserved in other countries where capitalism was more highly developed. This does not mean, of course, that the October Revolution has no other specific features. But it is precisely these two specific features that are important for us at the present moment, not only because they distinctly express the essence of the October Revolution, but also because they brilliantly reveal the opportunist nature of the theory of 'permanent revolution'.

Let us briefly examine these features.

The question of the labouring masses of the petty bourgeoisie, both urban and rural, the question of winning these masses to the side of the proletariat, is highly important for the proletarian revolution. Whom will the labouring people of town and country support in the struggle for power, the bourgeoisie or the proletariat; whose reserve will they become, the reserve of the bourgeoisie or the reserve of the proletariat – on this depend the fate of the revolution and the stability of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The revolutions in France in 1848 and 1871 came to grief chiefly because the peasant reserves proved to be on the side of the bourgeoisie. The October Revolution was victorious because it was able to deprive the bourgeoisie of its peasant reserves, because it was able to win these reserves to the side of the proletariat, and because in this revolution the proletariat proved to be the only guiding force for the vast masses of the labouring people of town and country.

He who has not understood this will never understand either the character of the October Revolution, or the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat, or the specific characteristics of the internal policy of our proletarian power.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is not simply a governmental top stratum 'skilfully' 'selected' by the careful hand of an 'experienced strategist', and 'judiciously relying' on the support of one section or another of the population. The

dictatorship of the proletariat is the class alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry for the purpose of overthrowing capital, for achieving the final victory of socialism, on the condition that the guiding force of this alliance is the proletariat.

Thus, it is not a question of 'slightly' underestimating or 'slightly' overestimating the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement, as certain diplomatic advocates of 'permanent revolution' are now fond of expressing it. It is a question of the nature of the new proletarian state which arose as a result of the October Revolution. It is a question of the character of the proletarian power, of the foundations of the dictatorship of the proletariat itself. 'The dictatorship of the proletariat', says Lenin,

is a specific form of class alliance between the proletariat, the vanguard of the working people, and the numerous non-proletarian strata of the working people (petty bourgeoisie, small proprietors, the peasantry, the intelligentsia, etc.), or the majority of these strata, an alliance against capital, an alliance whose aim is the complete overthrow of capital, complete suppression of the resistance offered by the bourgeoisie as well as of attempts at restoration on its part, an alliance for the final establishment and consolidation of socialism.

see vol. XVI, p. 241³

And further on:

If we translate the Latin, scientific, historico-philosophical term 'dictatorship' of the proletariat into simpler language, it means just the following: Only a definite class, namely, the urban workers and the factory, industrial workers in general, is able to lead the whole mass of the working and exploited people in the struggle to throw off the yoke of capital, in actually carrying it out, in the struggle to maintain and consolidate the victory, in the work of creating the new, socialist social system and in the entire struggle for the complete abolition of classes.

see vol. XVI, p. 248⁴

Such is the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat given by Lenin.

3 Lenin 1965j, p. 381.

4 Lenin 1965k, p. 420.

One of the specific features of the October Revolution is the fact that this revolution represents a classic application of Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Some comrades believe that this theory is a purely 'Russian' theory, applicable only to Russian conditions. That is wrong. It is absolutely wrong. In speaking of the labouring masses of the non-proletarian classes which are led by the proletariat, Lenin has in mind not only the Russian peasants, but also the labouring elements of the border regions of the Soviet Union, which until recently were colonies of Russia. Lenin constantly reiterated that without an alliance with these masses of other nationalities the proletariat of Russia could not achieve victory. In his articles on the national question and in his speeches at the congresses of the Comintern, Lenin repeatedly said that the victory of the world revolution was impossible without a revolutionary alliance, a revolutionary bloc, between the proletariat of the advanced countries and the oppressed peoples of the enslaved colonies. But what are colonies if not the oppressed labouring masses, and, primarily, the labouring masses of the peasantry? Who does not know that the question of the liberation of the colonies is *essentially* a question of the liberation of the labouring masses of the non-proletarian classes from the oppression and exploitation of finance capital?

But from this it follows that Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not a purely

'Russian' theory, but a theory which necessarily applies to all countries. Bolshevism is not only a Russian phenomenon. 'Bolshevism', says Lenin, is 'a model of tactics for all' (see *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, p. 89).⁵

Such are the characteristics of the first specific feature of the October Revolution.

How do matters stand with regard to Trotsky's theory of 'permanent revolution' in the light of this specific feature of the October Revolution?

We shall not dwell at length on Trotsky's position in 1905, when he 'simply' forgot all about the peasantry as a revolutionary force and advanced the slogan of 'No tsar, but a workers' government', that is, the slogan of revolution without the peasantry. Even Radek, that diplomatic defender of 'permanent revolution', is now obliged to admit that 'permanent revolution' in 1905 meant a 'leap into the air' away from reality (see *Pravda*, 14 December 1924).⁶ Now, apparently everyone admits that it is not worth bothering with this 'leap into the air' any more.

5 Lenin 1965f, p. 293.

6 Karl Radek, 'Parvus', *Pravda*, no. 285, 14 December 1924, p. 2.

Nor shall we dwell at length on Trotsky's position in the period of the war, say, in 1915, when, in his article 'The Struggle for Power', proceeding from the fact that 'we are living in the era of imperialism', that imperialism 'is no longer a matter of a bourgeois nation opposing an old regime, but of the proletariat opposing the bourgeois nation', he arrived at the conclusion that the revolutionary role of the peasantry was bound to subside, that the slogan of the confiscation of the land no longer had the same importance as formerly (see 1905, pp. 289–92).⁷ It is well-known that at that time, Lenin, examining this article of Trotsky's, accused him of 'repudiating' 'the role of the peasantry', and said that 'Trotsky is in fact helping the liberal-labour politicians in Russia, who by "repudiation" of the role of the peasantry understand a *refusal* to raise up the peasants for the revolution!' (see *Protiv techeniia*, pp. 307–8).⁸

Let us rather pass on to the later works of comrade Trotsky on this subject, to the works of the period when the proletarian dictatorship had already become established and when Trotsky had had the opportunity to test his theory of 'permanent revolution' in the light of actual events and to correct his errors. Let us take Trotsky's 'Preface' to his book 1905, written in 1922. Here is what Trotsky says in this 'Preface' concerning 'permanent revolution':

It was precisely in the interval between January 9 and the October strike of 1905 that those views which came to be called the theory of 'permanent revolution' were formed in the author's mind. This rather high-flown expression defines the thought that the Russian revolution, although directly concerned with bourgeois aims, could not stop short at those aims; the revolution could not solve its immediate, bourgeois tasks except by putting the proletariat into power. And the proletariat, once having power in its hands, would not be able to remain confined within the bourgeois framework of the revolution. On the contrary, precisely in order to guarantee its victory, the proletarian vanguard in the very earliest stages of its rule would have to make extremely deep inroads not only into feudal but also into bourgeois property relations. While doing so it would enter into hostile conflict, not only with all those bourgeois groups which had supported it during the first stages of its revolutionary struggle, but also with the broad masses of the peasantry, with whose collaboration it – the proletariat – had come into power. The contradictions between a workers' government and an overwhelming majority of peasants in a backward

7 Trotsky 1972b, p. 322.

8 Lenin 1964ff, p. 420.

country could be resolved only on an international scale, in the arena of a world proletarian revolution.⁹

That is what Trotsky says about his 'permanent revolution'.

One need only compare this quotation with the above quotations from Lenin's works on the dictatorship of the proletariat to perceive the great chasm that separates Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat from Trotsky's theory of 'permanent revolution'.

Lenin speaks of the alliance between the proletariat and the labouring strata of the peasantry as the basis of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Trotsky sees a 'hostile conflict' between 'the proletarian vanguard' and 'the broad masses of the peasantry'.

Lenin speaks of the leadership of the toiling and exploited masses by the proletariat. Trotsky sees 'contradictions between a workers' government and an overwhelming majority of peasants in a backward country'.

According to Lenin, the revolution draws its strength primarily from among the workers and peasants of Russia itself. According to Trotsky, the necessary strength can be found only 'in the arena of a world proletarian revolution'.

But what if the world revolution is fated to arrive with some delay? Is there any ray of hope for our revolution? Trotsky offers no ray of hope; for 'the contradictions between a workers' government ... could be resolved only ... in the arena of a world proletarian revolution'. According to this plan, there is but one prospect left for our revolution: to vegetate in its own contradictions and rot away while waiting for the world revolution.

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat according to Lenin?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a power which rests on an alliance between the proletariat and the labouring masses of the peasantry for 'the complete overthrow of capital' and for 'the final establishment and consolidation of socialism'.

What is the dictatorship of the proletariat according to Trotsky?

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a power which comes 'into hostile conflict' with 'the broad masses of the peasantry' and seeks the solution of its 'contradictions' only 'in the arena of a world proletarian revolution'.

What difference is there between this 'theory of permanent revolution' and the well-known theory of Menshevism which repudiates the concept of dictatorship of the proletariat?

Essentially, there is no difference.

9 Trotsky 1972b, pp. vi–vii.

There can be no doubt at all. 'Permanent revolution' is not a mere underestimation of the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement. 'Permanent revolution' is an underestimation of the peasant movement which leads to the repudiation of Lenin's theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Comrade Trotsky's 'permanent revolution' is a variety of Menshevism.

This is how matters stand with regard to the first specific feature of the October Revolution.

What are the characteristics of the second specific feature of the October Revolution?

In his study of imperialism, especially in the period of the war, Lenin arrived at the law of the uneven, spasmodic, economic and political development of the capitalist countries. According to this law, the development of enterprises, trusts, branches of industry and individual countries proceeds not evenly – not according to an established sequence, not in such a way that one trust, one branch of industry or one country is always in advance of the others, while other trusts or countries keep consistently one behind the other – but spasmodically, with interruptions in the development of some countries and leaps ahead in the development of others. Under these circumstances, the 'quite legitimate' striving of the countries that have slowed down to hold their old positions, and the equally 'legitimate' striving of the countries that have leapt ahead to seize new positions, lead to a situation in which armed clashes among the imperialist countries become an inescapable necessity. Such was the case, for example, with Germany, which half a century ago was a backward country in comparison with France and Britain. The same must be said of Japan as compared with Russia. It is well-known, however, that by the beginning of the twentieth century, Germany and Japan had leapt so far ahead that Germany had succeeded in overtaking France and had begun to press Britain hard on the world market, while Japan was pressing Russia. As is well-known, it was from these contradictions that the recent imperialist war arose.

This law proceeds from the following:

1) 'Capitalism has grown into a world system of colonial oppression and of the financial strangulation of the overwhelming majority of the population of the world by a handful of "advanced" countries' (see Preface to the French edition of Lenin's *Imperialism*);¹⁰

2) 'This "booty" is shared between two or three powerful world plunderers armed to the teeth (America, Britain, Japan), who are drawing the whole world in their war over the sharing of their booty' (*ibid.*);¹¹

10 Lenin 1964ss, p. 191.

11 *Ibid.*

3) The growth of contradictions within the world system of financial oppression and the inevitability of armed clashes lead to the world front of imperialism becoming easily vulnerable to revolution, and to a breach in this front in individual countries becoming probable;

4) This breach is most likely to occur at those points, and in those countries, where the chain of the imperialist front is weakest, that is to say, where imperialism is least consolidated, and where it is easiest for a revolution to expand;

5) In view of this, the victory of socialism in one country, even if that country is less developed in the capitalist sense, while capitalism remains in other countries, even if those countries are more highly developed in the capitalist sense – is quite possible and probable.

Such, briefly, are the foundations of Lenin’s theory of the proletarian revolution.

What is the second specific feature of the October Revolution?

The second specific feature of the October Revolution lies in the fact that this revolution represents a model of the practical application of Lenin’s theory of the proletarian revolution.

He who has not understood this specific feature of the October Revolution will never understand either the international nature of this revolution, or its colossal international might, or the specific features of its foreign policy. ‘Uneven economic and political development’, says Lenin,

is an absolute law of capitalism. Hence, the victory of socialism is possible first in several or even in one capitalist country alone. After expropriating the capitalists and organising their own socialist production, the victorious proletariat of that country will arise against the rest of the world – the capitalist world – attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, stirring uprisings in those countries against the capitalists, and in case of need using even armed force against the exploiting classes and their states ... [For] a free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states.

*see Protiv techeniia, p. 130*¹²

The opportunists of all countries assert that the proletarian revolution can begin – if it is to begin anywhere at all, according to their theory – only in industrially developed countries, and that the more highly developed these

12 Lenin 1964ww, pp. 342–3.

countries are industrially, the more chances there are for the victory of socialism. Moreover, according to them, the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country, and one in which capitalism is little developed at that, is excluded as something absolutely improbable. As far back as the period of the war, Lenin, taking as his basis the law of the uneven development of the imperialist states, opposed to the opportunists his theory of the proletarian revolution about the victory of socialism in one country, even if that country is one in which capitalism is less developed.

It is well-known that the October Revolution fully confirmed the correctness of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution.

How do matters stand with comrade Trotsky's 'permanent revolution' in the light of Lenin's theory of proletarian revolution?

Let us take comrade Trotsky's pamphlet *Our Revolution* (1906). Comrade Trotsky writes:

'Without the direct State support of the European proletariat the working class of Russia cannot remain in power and convert its temporary domination into a lasting socialist dictatorship. Of this there cannot for one moment be any doubt' (see *Nasha revoliutsiia*, p. 278).¹³

What does this quotation mean? It means that the victory of socialism in one country, in this case Russia, is impossible 'without direct state support from the European proletariat', i.e. before the European proletariat has conquered power.

What is there in common between this 'theory' and Lenin's thesis on the possibility of the victory of socialism 'in one capitalist country taken separately'?

Clearly, there is nothing in common.

But let us assume that comrade Trotsky's pamphlet, which was published in 1906, at a time when it was difficult to determine the character of our revolution, contains inadvertent errors and does not fully correspond to Trotsky's views at a later period. Let us examine another pamphlet written by Trotsky, his *Peace Programme*, which appeared before the October Revolution of 1917 and has now (1924) been republished in his book *1917*. In this pamphlet Trotsky criticises Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution about the victory of socialism in one country and opposes to it the slogan of a United States of Europe. He asserts that the victory of socialism in one country is impossible, that the victory of socialism is possible only as the victory of several of the principal countries of Europe (Britain, Russia, Germany), which combine into a United States of Europe; otherwise it is not possible at all. He says quite plainly that 'a

13 Trotsky 1965b, p. 237.

victorious revolution in Russia or in England is unthinkable without a revolution in Germany, and vice versa' (see 1917, v. III *Sochinenii t. Trotskogo*, part I, p. 89).¹⁴

'The only concrete historical consideration', says comrade Trotsky,

against the slogan of the United States of Europe was formulated by the Swiss *Sotsial-demokrat* (the then Central Organ of the Bolsheviks. I.St.) as follows: 'The unevenness of economic and political development is the unconditional law of capitalism'. From this *Sotsial-demokrat* draws the conclusion that the victory of socialism is possible in one country and that it is needless therefore to make the dictatorship of the proletariat in each isolated state conditional upon the creation of the United States of Europe. That the capitalist development of various countries is uneven is quite incontestable. But this unevenness is itself extremely uneven. The capitalist levels of England, Austria, Germany or France are not the same. But as compared with Africa and Asia all these countries represent capitalist 'Europe', which has matured for the socialist revolution. It is profitable and necessary to reiterate the elementary thought that no single country in its struggle has to 'wait' for the others, lest the idea of parallel international action be supplanted by the idea of procrastinating international inaction. Without waiting for the others we begin and continue the struggle on our own national soil in complete certainty that our initiative will provide the impulse for the struggle in other countries; and if this were not so, then it would be hopeless to think – as is borne out both by historical experience and theoretical considerations – that revolutionary Russia, for example, would be able to maintain herself in the face of conservative Europe, or that Socialist Germany could remain isolated in a capitalist world.

see v. III *Soch. tov. Trotskogo*, part I, pp. 89–90¹⁵

As you see, we have before us the same theory of the simultaneous victory of socialism in the principal countries of Europe which, as a rule, excludes Lenin's theory of revolution about the victory of socialism in one country.

It goes without saying that for the complete victory of socialism, for a complete guarantee against the restoration of the old order, the united efforts of the proletarians of several countries are necessary. It goes without saying that,

14 Trotsky, 'Programma mira' 1924, p. 89. For an abridged translation, see Trotsky 1918b.

15 Trotsky 1924i, pp. 89–90.

without the support given to our revolution by the proletariat of Europe, the proletariat of Russia could not have held out against the general onslaught, just as without the support given by the revolution in Russia to the revolutionary movement in the West the latter could not have developed at the pace at which it has begun to develop since the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia. It goes without saying that we need support. But what does support of our revolution by the West-European proletariat imply? Is not the sympathy of the European workers for our revolution, their readiness to thwart the imperialists' plans of intervention – is not all this support, real assistance? Unquestionably it is. Without such support, without such assistance, not only from the European workers but also from the colonial and dependent countries, the proletarian dictatorship in Russia would have been hard pressed. Up to now, has this sympathy and this assistance, coupled with the might of our Red Army and the readiness of the workers and peasants of Russia to defend their socialist fatherland to the last – has all this been sufficient to beat off the attacks of the imperialists and to win us the necessary conditions for the serious work of construction? Yes, it has been sufficient. Is this sympathy growing stronger, or is it waning? Unquestionably, it is growing stronger. Hence, have we favourable conditions, not only for pushing on with the organising of socialist economy, but also, in our turn, for giving support to the West-European workers and to the oppressed peoples of the East? Yes, we have. This is eloquently proved by the seven years history of the proletarian dictatorship in Russia. Can it be denied that a mighty wave of labour enthusiasm has already risen in our country? No, it cannot be denied.

After all this, what does comrade Trotsky's assertion that a revolutionary Russia could not hold out in the face of a conservative Europe signify?

It can signify only this: firstly, that comrade Trotsky does not appreciate the inherent strength of our revolution; secondly, that Trotsky does not understand the inestimable importance of the moral support which is given to our revolution by the workers of the West and the peasants of the East; thirdly, that Trotsky does not perceive the internal infirmity which is consuming imperialism today.

Carried away by his criticism of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution, comrade Trotsky unwittingly dealt himself a smashing blow in his pamphlet *Peace Programme* which appeared in 1917 and was republished in 1924.

But perhaps this pamphlet, too, has become out of date and has ceased for some reason or other to correspond to comrade Trotsky's present views? Let us take his later works, written after the victory of the proletarian revolution in one country, in Russia. Let us take, for example, Trotsky's 'Postscript', written in 1922, for the new edition of his pamphlet *Peace Programme*. Here is what he says in this 'Postscript':

The assertion reiterated several times in the *Peace Programme* that a proletarian revolution cannot culminate victoriously within national bounds may perhaps seem to some readers to have been refuted by the nearly five years' experience of our Soviet Republic. But such a conclusion would be unwarranted. The fact that the workers' state has held out against the whole world in one country, and a backward country at that, testifies to the colossal might of the proletariat, which in other, more advanced, more civilized countries will be truly capable of performing miracles. But while we have held our ground as a state politically and militarily, we have not arrived, or even begun to arrive, at the creation of a socialist society ... As long as the bourgeoisie remains in power in the other European countries we shall be compelled, in our struggle against economic isolation, to strive for agreements with the capitalist world; at the same time it may be said with certainty that these agreements may at best help us to mitigate some of our economic ills, to take one or another step forward, but real progress of a socialist economy in Russia will become possible *only after the victory*¹⁶ of the proletariat in the major European countries.

see v. III soch. Trotskogo, part I, pp. 92–3¹⁷

Thus speaks comrade Trotsky, plainly sinning against reality and stubbornly trying to save his 'permanent revolution' from final shipwreck.

It appears, then, that, twist and turn as you like, we not only have 'not arrived', but we have 'not even begun to arrive' at the creation of a socialist society. It appears that some people have been hoping for 'agreements with the capitalist world', but it also appears that nothing will come of these agreements; for, twist and turn as you like, 'real progress of a socialist economy' will not be possible until the proletariat has been victorious in the 'major European countries'.

Well, then, since there is still no victory in the West, the only 'choice' that remains for the revolution in Russia is: either to rot away or to degenerate into a bourgeois state.

It is no accident that comrade Trotsky has been talking for two years now about the 'degeneration' of our Party.

It is no accident that last year comrade Trotsky prophesied the 'doom' of our country.

How can this strange 'theory' be reconciled with Lenin's theory of the 'victory of socialism in one country'?

16 Italics are mine. I.St. [original footnote].

17 Trotskii 1924i, pp. 92–3.

How can this strange 'prospect' be reconciled with Lenin's view that the New Economic Policy will enable us 'to build the foundations of socialist economy'?

How can this 'permanent' hopelessness be reconciled, for instance, with the following words of Lenin:

Socialism is no longer a matter of the distant future, or an abstract picture, or an icon. Our opinion of icons is the same – a very bad one. We have brought socialism into everyday life and must here see how matters stand. That is the task of our day, the task of our epoch. Permit me to conclude by expressing confidence that difficult as this task may be, new as it may be compared with our previous task, and numerous as the difficulties may be that it entails, we shall all – not in a day, but in a few years – all of us together fulfil it whatever the cost, so that NEP Russia will become socialist Russia.

see v. XVIII, part II, p. 108¹⁸

How can this 'permanent' gloominess of Trotsky's be reconciled, for instance, with the following words of Lenin:

Indeed, the power of the state over all large-scale means of production, political power in the hands of the proletariat, the alliance of this proletariat with the many millions of small and very small peasants, the assured proletarian leadership of the peasantry, etc. – is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society out of co-operatives, out of co-operatives alone, which we formerly ridiculed as huckstering and which from a certain aspect we have the right to treat as such now, under NEP? Is this not all that is necessary to build a complete socialist society? It is still not the building of socialist society, but it is all that is necessary and sufficient for it.

see *O kooperatsii*, p. 5¹⁹

It is plain that these two views are incompatible and cannot in any way be reconciled. Comrade Trotsky's 'permanent revolution' is the repudiation of Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution; and conversely, Lenin's theory of the proletarian revolution is the repudiation of the theory of 'permanent revolution'.

18 Lenin 1966e, p. 443.

19 Lenin 1966f, p. 468.

Lack of faith in the strength and capacities of our revolution, lack of faith in the strength and capacity of the Russian proletariat – that is what lies at the root of the theory of ‘permanent revolution’.

Hitherto only one aspect of the theory of ‘permanent revolution’ has usually been noted – lack of faith in the revolutionary potentialities of the peasant movement. Now, in fairness, this must be supplemented by *another* aspect – lack of faith in the strength and capacity of the proletariat in Russia.

What difference is there between comrade Trotsky’s theory and the ordinary Menshevik theory that the victory of socialism in one country, and in a backward country at that, is impossible without the preliminary victory of the proletarian revolution ‘in the major countries of Western Europe’?

Essentially, there is no difference.

There can be no doubt at all. Comrade Trotsky’s theory of ‘permanent revolution’ is a variety of Menshevism.

Of late, rotten diplomats have appeared in our press who try to palm off the theory of ‘permanent revolution’ as something compatible with Leninism. Of course, they say, this theory proved to be worthless in 1905; but the mistake comrade Trotsky made was that he ran too far ahead at that time, in an attempt to apply to the situation in 1905 what could not then be applied. But later, they say, in October 1917, for example, when the revolution had had time to mature completely, comrade Trotsky’s theory proved to be quite appropriate. It is not difficult to guess that the chief of these diplomats is comrade Radek. Here, if you please, is what he says:

The war created a chasm between the peasantry, which was striving to win land and peace, and the petty-bourgeois parties; the war placed the peasantry under the leadership of the working class and of its vanguard the Bolshevik Party. This rendered possible, not the dictatorship of the working class and peasantry, but the dictatorship of the working class relying on the peasantry. What Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky advanced against Lenin in 1905 (i.e. ‘permanent revolution’ – I.St.) proved, as a matter of fact, to be the second stage of the historic development.

see *Pravda*, 21 February 1924, no. 42²⁰

Here every statement is a distortion.

20 Karl Radek, ‘Po povodu trekh nekrologov o Lenine (Istoricheskaiia rol’ Lenina)’, *Pravda*, no. 42, 21 February 1924, p. 2.

It is not true that the war 'rendered possible, not the dictatorship of the working class and peasantry, but the dictatorship of the working class relying on the peasantry'. Actually, the February Revolution of 1917 was the materialisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, interwoven in a peculiar way with the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

It is not true that the theory of 'permanent revolution', which comrade Radek bashfully refrains from mentioning, was advanced in 1905 by Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky. Actually, this theory was advanced by Parvus and Trotsky. Now, ten months later, comrade Radek corrects himself and deems it necessary to castigate Parvus for the theory of 'permanent revolution' (see his article on Parvus in *Pravda*).²¹ But in all fairness comrade Radek should also castigate Parvus's partner, comrade Trotsky.

It is not true that the theory of 'permanent revolution', which was brushed aside by the Revolution of 1905, proved to be correct in the 'second stage of the historic development', that is, during the October Revolution. The whole course of the October Revolution, its whole development, demonstrated and proved the utter bankruptcy of the theory of 'permanent revolution' and its absolute incompatibility with the foundations of Leninism.

Honeyed speeches and rotten diplomacy cannot hide the yawning chasm which lies between the theory of 'permanent revolution' and Leninism.

Certain Specific Features of the Tactics of the Bolsheviks During the Period of Preparation for October

In order to understand the tactics pursued by the Bolsheviks during the period of preparation for October, we must get a clear idea of at least some of the particularly important features of those tactics. This is all the more necessary since in numerous pamphlets on the tactics of the Bolsheviks precisely these features are frequently overlooked.

What are these features?

First specific feature. If one were to listen to comrade Trotsky, one would think that there were only two periods in the history of the preparation for October: the period of reconnaissance and the period of uprising, and that all else comes from the evil one. What was the April demonstration of 1917? 'The April demonstration, which moved more to "the left" than was expected, was a reconnaissance sortie to survey the mood of the masses and the relationship

²¹ Karl Radek, 'Parvus', *Pravda*, no. 285, 14 December 1924, p. 2.

between them and the Soviet majority' (see v. III, part I, *Soch. t. Trotskogo*, p. XXVII).²² And what was the July demonstration of 1917? In Trotsky's opinion, 'But this time too the affair boiled down to a new and broader reconnaissance at a new, higher stage of the movement' (see *ibid.*, p. XXXII).²³ Needless to say, the June demonstration of 1917, which was organised at the demand of our Party, should, according to Trotsky's idea, all the more be termed a 'reconnaissance'.

This would seem to imply that as early as March 1917 the Bolsheviks had ready a political army of workers and peasants, and that if they did not bring this army into action for an uprising in April, or in June, or in July, but engaged merely in 'reconnaissance', it was because, and only because, 'the information obtained from the reconnaissance' at the time was unfavourable.

Needless to say, this oversimplified notion of the political tactics of our Party is nothing but a confusion of ordinary military tactics with the revolutionary tactics of the Bolsheviks.

Actually, all these demonstrations were primarily the result of the spontaneous pressure of the masses, the result of the fact that the indignation of the masses against the war had boiled over and sought an outlet in the streets.

Actually, the task of the Party at that time was to shape and to guide the spontaneously arising demonstrations of the masses along the line of the revolutionary slogans of the Bolsheviks.

Actually, the Bolsheviks had no political army ready in March 1917, nor could they have had one. The Bolsheviks built up such an army (and had finally built it up by October 1917) only in the course of the struggle and conflicts of the classes between April and October 1917, through the April demonstration, the June and July demonstrations, the elections to the district and city Dumas, the struggle against the Kornilov revolt, and the winning over of the Soviets. A political army is not like a military army. A military command begins a war with an army ready to hand, whereas the Party has to create its army in the course of the struggle itself, in the course of class conflicts, as the masses themselves become convinced through their own experience of the correctness of the Party's slogans and policy.

Of course, every such demonstration at the same time threw a certain amount of light on the hidden interrelations of the forces involved, provided certain reconnaissance information, but this reconnaissance was not the motive for the demonstration, but its natural result.

22 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 100.

23 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 105.

In analysing the events preceding the uprising in October and comparing them with the events that marked the period from April to July, Lenin says:

Things are not as they were before April 20–21, June 9, July 3, for then it was a matter of spontaneous excitement which we, as a party, either failed to comprehend (April 20) or held back and shaped into a peaceful demonstration (June 9 and July 3), for we knew very well at that time that the Soviets were *not yet* ours, that the peasants still trusted the Liberdan-Chernov and not the Bolshevik course (uprising), that consequently we could not have the majority of the people behind us, and that consequently the uprising would be premature.

see v. XIV, part 2, p. 284²⁴

It is plain that 'reconnaissance' alone does not get one very far.

Obviously, it was not a question of 'reconnaissance', but of the following:

- 1) All through the period of preparation for October, the Party invariably relied in its struggle upon the spontaneous upsurge of the mass revolutionary movement;
- 2) While relying on the spontaneous upsurge, it maintained its own undivided leadership of the movement;
- 3) This leadership of the movement helped it to form the mass political army for the October uprising;
- 4) This policy was bound to result in the entire preparation for October proceeding under the leadership of *one* party, the Bolshevik Party;
- 5) This preparation for October, in its turn, brought it about that as a result of the October uprising power was concentrated in the hands of one party, the Bolshevik Party.

Thus, the undivided leadership of one party, the Communist Party, as the principal factor in the preparation for October – such is the characteristic feature of the October Revolution, such is the first specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

It scarcely needs proof that without this feature of Bolshevik tactics, the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the conditions of imperialism would have been impossible.

In this the October Revolution differs favourably from the revolution of 1871 in France, where the leadership was divided between two parties, neither of which could be called a Communist Party.

24 Lenin 196400, p. 210.

Second specific feature. The preparation for October thus proceeded under the leadership of one party, the Bolshevik Party. But how did the Party carry out this leadership, along what line did the latter proceed? This leadership proceeded along the line of isolating the compromising parties, as the most dangerous groupings in the period of the outbreak of the revolution, the line of isolating the SRS and Mensheviks.

What is the fundamental strategic rule of Leninism?

It is the recognition of the following:

1) The compromising parties are the most dangerous social support of the enemies of the revolution in the period of the approaching revolutionary outbreak;

2) It is impossible to overthrow the enemy (tsarism or the bourgeoisie) unless these parties are isolated;

3) The main weapons in the period of preparation for the revolution must therefore be directed towards isolating these parties, towards winning the broad masses of the working people away from them.

In the period of the struggle against tsarism, in the period of preparation for the bourgeois-democratic revolution (1905–16), the most dangerous social support of tsarism was the liberal-monarchist party, the Kadet Party. Why? Because it was the compromising party, the party of compromise between tsarism and the majority of the people, i.e. the peasantry as a whole. Naturally, the Party at that time directed its main blows at the Kadets, for unless the Kadets were isolated there could be no hope of a rupture between the peasantry and tsarism, and unless this rupture was ensured there could be no hope of the victory of the revolution. Many people at that time did not understand this specific feature of Bolshevik strategy and accused the Bolsheviks of excessive ‘Kadetophobia’; they asserted that with the Bolsheviks the struggle against the Kadets ‘overshadowed’ the struggle against the principal enemy – tsarism. But these accusations, for which there was no justification, revealed an utter failure to understand the Bolshevik strategy, which called for the isolation of the compromising party in order to facilitate, to hasten the victory over the principal enemy.

It scarcely needs proof that without this strategy, the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution would have been impossible.

In the period of preparation for October, the centre of gravity of the conflicting forces shifted to another plane. The tsar was gone. The Kadet Party had been transformed from a compromising force into a governing force, into the ruling force of imperialism. Now the fight was no longer between tsarism and the people, but between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. In this period the petty-bourgeois-democratic parties, the parties of the SRS and Menshev-

iks, were the most dangerous social support of imperialism. Why? Because these parties were then the compromising parties, the parties of *compromise* between imperialism and the labouring masses. Naturally, the Bolsheviks at that time directed their main blows at these parties; for unless these parties were isolated there could be no hope of a *rupture* between the labouring masses and imperialism, and unless this rupture was ensured there could be no hope of the victory of the Soviet revolution. Many people at that time did not understand this specific feature of the Bolshevik tactics and accused the Bolsheviks of displaying 'excessive hatred' towards the SRS and Mensheviks, and of 'forgetting' the principal goal. But the entire period of preparation for October eloquently testifies to the fact that only by pursuing these tactics could the Bolsheviks ensure the victory of the October Revolution.

The characteristic feature of this period was the further revolutionisation of the labouring masses of the peasantry, their disillusionment with the SRS and Mensheviks, their defection from these parties, their turn towards rallying directly around the proletariat as the only consistently revolutionary force, capable of leading the country to peace. The history of this period is the history of the struggle between the SRS and Mensheviks, on the one hand, and the Bolsheviks, on the other, for the labouring masses of the peasantry, for winning over these masses. The outcome of this struggle was decided by the coalition period, the Kerensky period, the refusal of the SRS and Mensheviks to confiscate the landlords' land, the fight of the SRS and Mensheviks to continue the war, the June offensive at the front, the introduction of capital punishment for soldiers, the Kornilov revolt. And they decided the issue of this struggle entirely in favour of the Bolshevik strategy; for had not the SRS and Mensheviks been isolated it would have been impossible to overthrow the government of the imperialists, and had this government not been overthrown it would have been impossible to break away from the war. The policy of isolating the SRS and Mensheviks proved to be the only correct policy.

Thus, isolation of the Menshevik and SR parties as the main line in directing the preparations for October – such was the second specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks.

It scarcely needs proof that without this feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks, the alliance of the working class and the labouring masses of the peasantry would have been left hanging in the air.

It is characteristic that in his *The Lessons of October* comrade Trotsky says nothing, or next to nothing, about this specific feature of the Bolshevik tactics.

Third specific feature. Thus, the Party, in directing the preparations for October, pursued the line of isolating the Socialist Revolutionary and Menshevik parties, of winning the broad masses of the workers and peasants away from

them. But how, concretely, was this isolation effected by the Party – in what form, under what slogan? It was effected in the form of the revolutionary mass movement for the power of the Soviets, under the slogan ‘All Power to the Soviets!’, by means of the struggle to convert the Soviets from organs for mobilising the masses into organs of the uprising, into organs of power, into the apparatus of a new proletarian state power.

Why was it precisely the Soviets that the Bolsheviks seized upon as the principal organisational lever that could facilitate the task of isolating the Mensheviks and SRs, that was capable of advancing the cause of the proletarian revolution, and that was destined to lead the millions of labouring masses to the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat?

What are the Soviets?

‘The Soviets’, said Lenin as early as September 1917,

are a new state apparatus which, in the first place, provides an armed force of workers and peasants; and this force is not divorced from the people, as was the old standing army, but is very closely bound up with the people. From the military point of view this force is incomparably more powerful than previous forces; from the revolutionary point of view, it cannot be replaced by anything else. Secondly, this apparatus provides a bond with the people, with the majority of the people, so intimate, so indissoluble, so easily verifiable and renewable, that nothing even remotely like it existed in the previous state apparatus. Thirdly, this apparatus, by virtue of the fact that its personnel is elected and subject to recall at the people’s will without any bureaucratic formalities, is far more democratic than any previous apparatus. Fourthly, it provides a close contact with the most varied professions, thereby facilitating the adoption of the most varied and most radical reforms without red tape. Fifthly, it provides an organisational form for the vanguard, i.e., for the most class-conscious, most energetic and most progressive section of the oppressed classes, the workers and peasants, and so constitutes an apparatus by means of which the vanguard of the *oppressed* classes can elevate, train, educate, and lead *the entire vast mass* of these classes, which has up to now stood completely outside of political life and history. Sixthly, it makes it possible to combine the advantages of the parliamentary system with those of immediate and direct democracy, i.e., to vest in the people’s elected representatives both legislative *and executive* functions. Compared with the bourgeois parliamentary system, this is an advance in democracy’s development which is of world-wide, historic significance ... If the creative enthusiasm of the revolutionary classes had not given rise to the Soviets, the proletarian

revolution in Russia would have been a hopeless cause, for the proletariat could certainly not retain power with the old state apparatus, and it is impossible to create a new apparatus immediately.

see 'Uderzhat li bol'sheviki gosudarstvennuiu vlast'?, v. XIV, part 2, pp. 228–30²⁵

That is why the Bolsheviks seized upon the Soviets as the principal organisational link that could facilitate the task of organising the October Revolution and the creation of a new, powerful apparatus of the proletarian state power.

From the point of view of its internal development, the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets!' passed through two stages: the first (up to the July defeat of the Bolsheviks, during the period of dual power), and the second (after the defeat of the Kornilov revolt).

During the first stage, this slogan meant breaking the bloc of the Mensheviks and SRS with the Kadets, the formation of a Soviet Government consisting of Mensheviks and SRS (for at that time the Soviets were SR and Menshevik), the right of free agitation for the opposition (i.e. for the Bolsheviks), and the free struggle of parties within the Soviets, in the expectation that by means of such a struggle the Bolsheviks would succeed in capturing the Soviets and changing the composition of the Soviet Government in the course of a peaceful development of the revolution. This plan, of course, did not signify the dictatorship of the proletariat. But it undoubtedly facilitated the preparation of the conditions required for ensuring the dictatorship; for, by putting the Mensheviks and SRS in power and compelling them to carry out in practice their anti-revolutionary platform, it hastened the exposure of the true nature of these parties, hastened their isolation, their divorce from the masses. The July defeat of the Bolsheviks, however, interrupted this development; for it gave preponderance to the generals' and Kadets' counter-revolution and threw the SRS and Mensheviks into the arms of that counter-revolution. This compelled the Party temporarily to withdraw the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets!', only to put it forward again in the conditions of a fresh revolutionary upsurge.

The defeat of the Kornilov uprising ushered in the second stage. The slogan 'All power to the Soviets!' became again the immediate slogan. But now this slogan had a different meaning from that in the first stage. Its content had radically changed. Now this slogan meant a complete rupture with imperialism and the passing of power to the Bolsheviks, for the majority of the Soviets were already Bolshevik. Now this slogan meant the revolution's direct approach towards the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of an uprising. More

25 Lenin 1964xx, pp. 103–4.

than that, this slogan now meant the organisation of the dictatorship of the proletariat and giving it a state form.

The inestimable significance of the tactics of transforming the Soviets into organs of state power lay in the fact that they caused millions of working people to break away from imperialism, exposed the Menshevik and SR parties as the tools of imperialism, and brought the masses by a direct route, as it were, to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Thus, the policy of transforming the Soviets into organs of state power, as the most important condition for isolating the compromising parties and for the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat – such is the third specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

Fourth specific feature. The picture would not be complete if we did not deal with the question of how and why the Bolsheviks were able to transform their Party slogans into slogans for the vast masses, into slogans which pushed the revolution forward; how and why they succeeded in convincing not only the vanguard, and not only the majority of the working class, but also the majority of the people, of the correctness of their policy.

The point is that for the victory of the revolution, if it is really a people's revolution embracing the masses in their millions, correct Party slogans alone are not enough. For the victory of the revolution one more necessary condition is required, namely, that the masses themselves become convinced through their own experience of the correctness of these slogans. Only then do the slogans of the Party become the slogans of the masses themselves. Only then does the revolution really become a people's revolution. One of the specific features of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October was that they correctly determined the paths and turns which would naturally lead the masses to the Party's slogans – to the very threshold of the revolution, so to speak – thus helping them to feel, to test, to realise by their own experience the correctness of these slogans. In other words, one of the specific features of the tactics of the Bolsheviks is that they do not confuse leadership of the Party with leadership of the masses; that they clearly see the difference between the first sort of leadership and the second; that they, therefore, represent the science, not only of leadership of the Party, but of leadership of the vast masses of the working people.

A graphic example of the manifestation of this feature of Bolshevik tactics was provided by the experience of convening and dispersing the Constituent Assembly.

It is well-known that the Bolsheviks advanced the slogan of a Republic of Soviets as early as April 1917. It is well-known that the Constituent Assembly was a bourgeois parliament, fundamentally opposed to the principles of a

Republic of Soviets. How could it happen that the Bolsheviks, who were advancing towards a Republic of Soviets, at the same time demanded that the Provisional Government should immediately convene the Constituent Assembly? How could it happen that the Bolsheviks not only took part in the elections, but themselves convened the Constituent Assembly? How could it happen that a month before the uprising, in the transition from the old to the new, the Bolsheviks considered a temporary combination of a Republic of Soviets with the Constituent Assembly possible?

This 'happened' because:

- 1) The idea of a Constituent Assembly was one of the most popular ideas among the broad masses of the population;
- 2) The slogan of the immediate convocation of the Constituent Assembly helped to expose the counter-revolutionary nature of the Provisional Government;
- 3) In order to discredit the idea of a Constituent Assembly in the eyes of the masses, it was necessary to lead the masses to the walls of the Constituent Assembly with their demands for land, for peace, for the power of the Soviets, thus bringing them face to face with the actual, live Constituent Assembly;
- 4) Only this could help the masses to become convinced through their own experience of the counter-revolutionary nature of the Constituent Assembly and of the necessity of dispersing it;
- 5) All this naturally presupposed the possibility of a temporary combination of the Republic of Soviets with the Constituent Assembly, as one of the means for eliminating the Constituent Assembly;
- 6) Such a combination, if brought about under the condition that all power was transferred to the Soviets, could only signify the subordination of the Constituent Assembly to the Soviets, its conversion into an appendage of the Soviets, its painless extinction.

It scarcely needs proof that had the Bolsheviks not adopted such a policy, the dispersion of the Constituent Assembly would not have taken place so smoothly, and the subsequent actions of the SRs and Mensheviks under the slogan 'All Power to the Constituent Assembly!' would not have failed so signally.

'We took part', says Lenin,

in the elections to the Constituent Assembly, the Russian bourgeois parliament in September–November 1917. Were our tactics correct or not? ... In September–November 1917, did we, the Russian Bolsheviks, not have more right than any Western Communists to consider that parliamentarianism was politically obsolete in Russia? Of course we did, for the point

is not whether bourgeois parliaments have existed for a long time or a short time, but how far the masses of the working people are prepared (ideologically, politically and practically) to accept the Soviet system and to dissolve the bourgeois-democratic parliament (or allow it to be dissolved). It is an absolutely incontestable and fully established historical fact that, in September–November 1917, the urban working class and the soldiers and peasants of Russia were, because of a number of special conditions, exceptionally well prepared to accept the Soviet system and to disband the most democratic of bourgeois parliaments. Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks did not boycott the Constituent Assembly, but took part in the elections both before and after the proletariat conquered political power.

see *Detskaia bolezn'*, v. XVII, pp. 148–9²⁶

Why then did they not boycott the Constituent Assembly? Because, says Lenin,

participation in a bourgeois-democratic parliament, even a few weeks before – the victory of a Soviet republic and even after such a victory, not only does not harm the revolutionary proletariat, but actually helps that proletariat to prove to the backward masses why such parliaments deserve to be done away with; it facilitates their successful dissolution, and helps to make bourgeois parliamentarianism ‘politically obsolete’.

*ibid.*²⁷

It is characteristic that Trotsky does not understand this feature of Bolshevik tactics and snorts at the ‘theory’ of combining the Constituent Assembly with the Soviets, qualifying it as Hilferdingism.

He does not understand that to permit such a combination, accompanied by the slogan of an uprising and the probable victory of the Soviets, in connection with the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, was the only revolutionary tactics, which had nothing in common with the Hilferding tactics of converting the Soviets into an appendage of the Constituent Assembly; he does not understand that the mistake committed by some comrades in this question gives him no grounds for disparaging the absolutely correct position taken by Lenin and the Party on the ‘combined type of state power’ *under* certain conditions (cf. v. XIV, part 2, p. 275).²⁸

26 Lenin 1966b, pp. 59–60.

27 Lenin 1966b, p. 60.

28 Lenin 196400, p. 200.

He does not understand that if the Bolsheviks had not adopted this special policy towards the Constituent Assembly, they would not have succeeded in winning over to their side the vast masses of the people; and if they had not won over these masses, they could not have transformed the October uprising into a profound people's revolution.

It is interesting to note that comrade Trotsky even snorts at the words 'people', 'revolutionary democracy', etc., occurring in articles by Bolsheviks, and considers them improper for a Marxist to use.

Comrade Trotsky has evidently forgotten that even in September 1917, a month before the victory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, Lenin, that unquestionable Marxist, wrote of the necessity 'for the immediate transfer of all power to the revolutionary democrats, headed by the revolutionary proletariat' (see v. XIV, part 2, p. 139).²⁹

Comrade Trotsky has evidently forgotten that Lenin, that unquestionable Marxist, quoting the well-known letter of Marx to Kugelmann (April 1871)³⁰ to the effect that the smashing of the bureaucratic-military state machine is the preliminary condition for every real people's revolution on the Continent, writes in black and white the following lines:

Particular attention should be paid to Marx's extremely profound remark that the destruction of the bureaucratic-military state machine is 'the precondition for every real people's revolution'. This idea of a people's revolution seems strange coming from Marx, so that the Russian Plekhanovites and Mensheviks, those followers of [Petr] Struve who wish to be regarded as Marxists, might possibly declare such an expression to be a 'slip of the pen' on Marx's part. They have reduced Marxism to such a state of wretchedly liberal distortion that nothing exists for them beyond the antithesis between bourgeois revolution and proletarian revolution, and even this antithesis they interpret in an utterly lifeless way ... In Europe, in 1871, the proletariat did not constitute the majority of the people in any country on the Continent. A 'people's' revolution, one actually sweeping the majority into its stream, could be such only if it embraced both the proletariat and the peasants. These two classes then constituted the 'people'. These two classes are united by the fact that the 'bureaucratic-military state machine' oppresses, crushes, exploits them. To smash this machine, to break it up, is truly in the interest of the 'people', of their majority, of

29 Lenin 1964j, p. 26.

30 Marx and Engels 1975, p. 131.

the workers and most of the peasants, is 'the precondition' for a free alliance of the poor peasant and the proletarians, whereas without such an alliance democracy is unstable and socialist transformation is impossible.

see *Gosudarstvo i revoliutsiia*, v. XIV, part 2, pp. 327–8³¹

These words of Lenin's should not be forgotten.

Thus, the ability to convince the masses of the correctness of the Party slogans on the basis of their own experience, by bringing them to the revolutionary positions, as the most important condition for the winning over of the millions of working people to the side of the Party – such is the fourth specific feature of the tactics of the Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for October.

I think that what I have said is quite sufficient to get a clear idea of the characteristic features of these tactics.

The October Revolution as the Beginning of and the Precondition for the World Revolution

There can be no doubt that the universal theory of a simultaneous victory of the revolution in the principal countries of Europe, the theory that the victory of socialism in one country is impossible, has proved to be an artificial and untenable theory. The seven years' history of the proletarian revolution in Russia speaks not for but against this theory. This theory is unacceptable not only as a scheme of development of the world revolution, for it contradicts obvious facts. It is still less acceptable as a slogan; for it fetters, rather than releases, the initiative of individual countries which, by reason of certain historical conditions, obtain the opportunity to break through the front of capital independently; for it does not stimulate an active onslaught on capital in individual countries, but encourages passive waiting for the moment of the 'universal denouement'; for it cultivates among the proletarians of the different countries not the spirit of revolutionary determination, but the mood of Hamlet-like doubt over the question, 'What if the others fail to back us up?' Lenin was absolutely right in saying that the victory of the proletariat in one country is the 'typical case', that 'a simultaneous revolution in a number of countries' can only be a 'rare exception' (see *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia i renegat Kautskii*, 1918, p. 38).³²

31 Lenin 1964rr, pp. 416–17.

32 Lenin 1965f, p. 253.

But, as is well-known, Lenin's theory of revolution is not limited to this side of the question. It is also the theory of the development of the world revolution.³³ The victory of socialism in one country is not a self-sufficient task. The revolution which has been victorious in one country must regard itself not as a self-sufficient entity, but as an aid, as a means *for* hastening the victory of the proletariat in all countries. For the victory of the revolution in one country, in the present case Russia, is not only the product of the uneven development and progressive decay of imperialism; it is at the same time the beginning of and the precondition for the world revolution.

Undoubtedly, the paths of development of the world revolution are not as plain as it may have seemed previously, before the victory of the revolution in one country, before the appearance of developed imperialism, which is 'the eve of the socialist revolution'. For a new factor has arisen – the law of the uneven development of the capitalist countries, which operates under the conditions of developed imperialism, and which implies the inevitability of armed collisions, the general weakening of the world front of capital, and the possibility of the victory of socialism in individual countries. For a new factor has arisen – the vast Soviet country, lying between the West and the East, between the centre of the financial exploitation of the world and the arena of colonial oppression, a country which by its very existence is revolutionising the whole world.

All these are factors (not to mention other less important ones) which cannot be left out of account in studying the paths of development of the world revolution.

Formerly, it was commonly thought that the revolution would develop through the even 'maturing' of the elements of socialism, primarily in the more developed, the 'advanced', countries. Now this view must be considerably modified.

'The system of international relationships', says Lenin,

which has now taken shape is one in which a European state, Germany, is enslaved by the victor countries. Furthermore, owing to their victory, a number of states, the oldest states in the West, are in a position to make some insignificant concessions to their oppressed classes – concessions which, insignificant though they are, nevertheless delay the revolutionary movement in those countries and create some semblance of 'social peace'.

33 See my pamphlet *O Lenine i Leninizme* [original footnote]. [Stalin 1924].

At the same time, as a result of the last imperialist war, a number of countries of the East, India, China, etc, have been completely jolted out of the rut. Their development has definitely shifted to general European capitalist lines. The general European ferment has begun to affect them, and it is now clear to the whole world that they have been drawn into a process of development that must lead to a crisis in the whole of world capitalism.

In view of this fact, and in connection with it,

the West-European capitalist countries consummate their development towards socialism ... not as we formerly expected. They are not consummating it through the gradual ‘maturing’ of socialism, but through the exploitation of some countries by others, through the exploitation of the first of the countries vanquished in the imperialist war combined with the exploitation of the whole of the East. On the other hand, precisely as a result of the first imperialist war, the East has been definitely drawn into the revolutionary movement, has been definitely drawn into the general maelstrom of the world revolutionary movement.

see *Luchshe men'she, da luchshe*, 1924, pp. 33–4³⁴

If we add to this the fact that not only are the defeated countries and colonies being exploited by the victorious countries, but that some of the victorious countries are falling into the orbit of financial exploitation at the hands of the most powerful of the victorious countries, America and Britain; that the contradictions among all these countries are an extremely important factor in the disintegration of world imperialism; that, in addition to these contradictions, very profound contradictions exist and are developing within each of these countries; that all these contradictions are becoming more profound and more acute because of the existence, alongside these countries, of the great Republic of Soviets – if all this is taken into consideration, then the picture of the special character of the international situation will become more or less complete.

Most probably, the world revolution will develop by the breaking away of a number of new countries from the system of the imperialist states as a result of revolution, while the proletarians of these countries will be supported by the proletariat of the imperialist states. We see that the first country to break away, the first victorious country, is already being supported by the workers and the

34 Lenin 1966g, p. 499.

labouring masses of other countries. Without this support, it could not hold out. Undoubtedly, this support will increase and grow. But there can also be no doubt that the very development of the world revolution, the very process of the breaking away from imperialism of a number of new countries will be the more rapid and thorough, the more thoroughly socialism becomes consolidated in the first victorious country, the faster this country is transformed into a base for the further unfolding of the world revolution, into a lever for the further disintegration of imperialism.

While it is true that the final victory of socialism in the first country to emancipate itself is impossible without the combined efforts of the proletarians of several countries, it is equally true that the unfolding of the world revolution will be the more rapid and thorough, the more effective the assistance rendered by the first socialist country to the workers and labouring masses of all other countries.

In what should this assistance be expressed?

It should be expressed, firstly, in the victorious country achieving 'the utmost possible in one country for the development, support and awakening of the revolution in all countries' (see *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia i renegat Kautskii*, 1918, p. 88).³⁵

It should be expressed, secondly, in that the 'victorious proletariat' of one country, 'after expropriating the capitalists and organising their own socialist production ... will arise against the rest of the capitalist world, attracting to its cause the oppressed classes of other countries, stirring uprisings in those countries against the capitalists, and in case of need using even armed force against the exploiting classes and their states' (see *Protiv techeniia*, p. 130).³⁶

The characteristic feature of the assistance given by the victorious country is not only that it hastens the victory of the proletarians of other countries, but also that, by facilitating this victory, it ensures the final victory of socialism in the first victorious country.

Most probably, in the course of development of the world revolution, side by side with the centres of imperialism in individual capitalist countries and with the system of these countries throughout the world, centres of socialism will be created in individual Soviet countries and a system of these centres throughout the world, and the struggle between these two systems will fill the history of the unfolding of the world revolution:

35 Lenin 1965f, p. 292.

36 Lenin 1964ww, p. 342.

For, says Lenin, 'a free union of nations in socialism is impossible without a more or less prolonged and stubborn struggle of the socialist republics against the backward states' (see *Protiv techeniia*, p. 130).³⁷

The world significance of the October Revolution lies not only in the fact that it constitutes a great beginning made by one country in causing a breach in the system of imperialism and that it is the first centre of socialism in the ocean of imperialist countries, but also in that it constitutes the first stage of the world revolution and a mighty base for its further development.

Therefore, not only those are wrong who forget the international character of the October Revolution and declare the victory of socialism in one country to be a purely national, and only a national, phenomenon, but also those who, although they bear in mind the international character of the October Revolution, are inclined to regard this revolution as something passive, merely destined to accept help from without. Actually, not only does the October Revolution need support from the revolution in other countries, but the revolution in those countries also needs the support of the October Revolution, in order to accelerate and advance the cause of overthrowing world imperialism.

37 Lenin 1964ww, pp. 342–3.

“The Lessons of October” and the Bulgarian Communist Party¹

V. Kolarov

I What Kinds of ‘Lessons of October’ is Comrade Trotsky Giving the European Communist Parties, and What Lessons are These Parties Taking from ‘October’?

In the introduction to his book *1917*, comrade Trotsky resolutely calls on the Comintern to finally take up a fundamental analysis of the ‘October experience’. ‘Leaders of European Communist parties who have not studied the history of the October overthrow in all its depth and detail would be like the military commander who, preparing today for new wars, would ignore the strategic, tactical and technical experience of the last imperialist war. Such a commander would inevitably condemn his army to defeat in the future’ (*Sochineniia*, vol. 1, p. xiv).²

Just last year the Comintern suffered heavy defeats in Bulgaria and Germany. Comrade Trotsky is clearly assigning some responsibility for these events to the lack of ‘theoretical assimilation of the lessons of October’³ by the leaders of the party. Consequently ‘last year, we were once again brought face to face with the tasks of the proletarian overthrow. It is high time that we gather all the documents, publish all the materials and begin studying them!’ (p. xiii).⁴

Confronted with the ‘tasks of October’, communist parties are eagerly responding to comrade Trotsky’s urgent call. They are endeavouring to supplement and deepen their knowledge of revolutionary strategy through a more careful study of the rich experience of the Great October Revolution and the RKP(b), and this is intended to aid them in this matter.

However – and quite naturally – comrade Trotsky was not satisfied with just one formal call. He sought to provide the parties with a guide to the correct

1 V. Kolarov, ‘“Oktiabr’skie uroki” i Bolgarskaia kommunisticheskaia partiia’, *Pravda*, no. 290, 20 December 1924, pp. 2–3; and simultaneously in *Izvestiia*, no. 291, 20 December 1924, p. 4.

2 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 88–9.

3 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

4 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 88.

study of 'the lessons of October'. After all, the Comintern was founded a year and a half after the October Revolution; the majority of its sections arose even later; and those who came over from the Second International brought more than a little ballast with them in the form of Social-Democratic vestiges. Moreover, a whole new generation which is now active in the struggle, often in the leadership of the parties, has engaged with political life since 1917. The Fifth World Congress took place under the banner of the bolshevisation of the communist parties, which means, as comrade Trotsky explains, educating them in their selection of leadership personnel 'so that they will not drift along on the current when the time comes for their own October' (p. lxv).⁵ Without doubt, it must be acknowledged that it is very valuable and necessary for the young parties and generations to study the most important stages and milestones of this unique and stormy historical period which culminated in the decisive victory of the proletariat in one of the greatest states in the world.

Apparently, comrade Trotsky's introduction was destined to fulfil this important task. And the entire Comintern was supposed to express its gratitude to him.

Unfortunately, comrade Trotsky's *The Lessons of October* is not deserving of this in the least. On the contrary, with this new piece of writing, the author of *Terrorism and Communism*⁶ – a work that was truly remarkable and was thoroughly saturated with Bolshevik thinking and which did more than a little to destroy a whole range of dangerous Social-Democratic shibboleths – puts himself at odds with the basic direction already being taken to Bolshevise the communist parties. To the cause of the revolutionary construction of the Comintern, i.e. the creation of genuine Bolshevik parties capable of organising victory in the proletariat's struggle for power, *The Lessons of October* brings only vacillation, unease, and bewilderment.

The main condition for successfully bolshevising the communist parties of the capitalist countries is to maintain completely the Bolshevik character of the RKP(b). The RKP(b) is the irreplaceable and authoritative teacher of the Comintern. We must not forget that the huge majority of the sections of the Comintern know how to overcome the enormous internal difficulties, such as a certain organisational conservatism, well-known old Social-Democratic methods and habits, some deeply rooted petty-bourgeois illusions, etc., thanks to their deep conviction in the correctness of Bolshevism and the moral and organisational authority of the Comintern. This is why any blow to the ideological principles

5 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 136.

6 Trotsky 1963.

of the RKP(b), any attack on its internal unity, reflects inevitably on the development of the whole International, complicates and undermines the cause of building the revolution. It is quite clear that this cause will lag behind, and that harmful traditions in the parties will persist, if every now and then the model and organisational embodiment of Bolshevism – the RKP(b) – is shaken by discussions of the basic principles of the party, and consequently of the Comintern.

Even a blind person can see from last year's discussion that, in the general view of the party masses and the entire Communist International, the RKP(b) stands unwaveringly on the principles of Leninism. The revisionist attempts were decisively rejected. The politics and tactics of the RKP(b) and the Comintern since then have only confirmed the correctness of the Bolshevik position. Why was it necessary to stir up the party and the Comintern less than six months later, and not because of tactical political goals but because of *The Lessons of October* which has raised fundamental questions about Leninism and has slyly called into question the entire activity of the leading comrades of the RKP(b) and the Comintern?

Surely it is not the most valuable 'October lesson' for young communist parties which have already stopped just marvelling at the great example of the Russian workers and have gradually begun to delve into the secrets of the complex and difficult 'strategic, tactical and technical'⁷ art of the RKP(b), to arouse their distrust of the RKP(b) and its leaders, as comrade Trotsky is trying to do now? However, this time this revisionist attempt will find the party masses of all countries more prepared and more tightly united around the RKP(b) and the Comintern. It will be rejected without any wavering. So what is the purpose of this foray?

But even if he formally stands alone against the whole party and the whole International, perhaps comrade Trotsky was essentially correct when he said at the Thirteenth Congress of the RKP(b) that 'the party is always right'⁸

No, basically – in terms of the significance and role of the Communist Party in the seizure of power and the preparation for it – comrade Trotsky is wrong and conflicted sharply with Lenin, the RKP(b), the Comintern, and the historical facts. The way he approaches and analyses the facts in *The Lessons of October* pushes the RKP(b) into the shadows, highlighting instead the role of

7 Trotsky uses this exact phrase in relation to the experience to be garnered by communist parties from the First World War (Trotsky, Document 1, p. 89).

8 *Trinadtsatyi s'ezd* 1924, p. 167. The precise quotation is: 'The party is in the final analysis always right'.

leading personalities. This approach does not jibe at all with what comrade Trotsky writes about the importance of the proletarian party. And the young communist parties, which have embarked on Bolshevik re-education [*perevospitanie*] and which have learned from Lenin and the RKP(b) how to understand the significance and role of the Communist Party as the collective mind [*kollektivnyi um*], experience, and will of the proletariat, do not agree at all with *The Lessons of October's* return to the theory of historical personalities, heroes and the crowd, all amply illustrated by comrade Trotsky's *Lessons*. They learned from Lenin to look at Lenin himself not as the demiurge of the revolution but as the ingenious leader of the party which prepared and led the proletariat in the greatest revolution. It is through the prism of the RKP(b) that the communist parties evaluate the role in the revolution both of comrade Trotsky and of all the other leading Russian comrades. The proletariat cannot create exceptional people, but it can and does create its own far-sighted, fighting and disciplined party. Only by strengthening the faith of the proletariat in its collective mind and in its capability as a revolutionary class ready in a defined objective situation to seize power from the hands of the bourgeoisie, will it be possible to stimulate the energy of the masses towards improving the selection and training of party leaders and speeding up the re-education of the communist parties themselves.

These are the kinds of lessons the communist parties are learning from October; analysing them in detail and supporting them with concrete, historical facts is a very important and rewarding task. However, comrade Trotsky's 'lessons' contradict them, and our fraternal communist parties will indisputably reject the former both in theory and in practice.



Comrade Trotsky is apparently drawing lessons from October for the re-education of young and inexperienced communist parties. But in reality it turns out that he is using the mistakes and shortcomings of the latter to teach how to ... correct the old and experienced RKP(b). The problem, you see, is not so much the lack of experienced leaders in the European communist parties and the presence of Social-Democratic vestiges in them which leads to big mistakes like the heavy defeats in Bulgaria and Germany last year – the problem lies much more with ... the unreliability of the leaders of the RKP(b) and of the Comintern. Comrade Trotsky lays not all but a good deal of the blame for last year's defeats of the International at the feet of leading Russian comrades. In the final analysis, his work comes down to a fresh attack on the leaders of the RKP(b) in the realm of Comintern politics.

After the German Communist Party, the Bulgarian Party also categorically stated that its defeats last year had nothing at all to do with 'inept' leadership on the part of the Russian comrades, and it came out decisively against using any of its mistakes to open up a front inside the RKP(b).

II **The Defeat of the Bulgarian Communist Party, Comrade Trotsky's Explanation, and Where the Truth Lies**

Comrade Trotsky complains that 'neither the Bulgarian, nor even the German experience, of last year has yet received a complete and concrete enough evaluation' (p. xii).⁹

If this statement were true, it would be a serious accusation against the Comintern. However, as far as the Bulgarian events are concerned here, we maintain that it does not correspond to reality. The Bulgarian Communist Party, having been chased into the underground, has not only explained to the masses fully and clearly enough the reasons for the defeats, and drawn the appropriate lessons from them, but the Bulgarian question has been the subject of a number of exhaustive, international discussions. Thus, last year the Balkan Communist Conference, attended by representatives of the most important sections of the Comintern, devoted a number of its meetings to it, and passed comprehensive resolutions. In February of this year, with representatives present from all the tendencies which existed in the BKP at that time, the Executive Committee of the Comintern (ИККИ) discussed the question thoroughly. Comrades Zinoviev, Bukharin, Radek, Miliutin, Zetkin, [Umberto] Terracini etc. participated in the discussions. The resolution it adopted was exhaustive in all respects. Finally, the question was studied in a special commission of the Fifth World Congress. One might disagree with the evaluation given by these international gatherings, but it cannot be said that it was not 'complete and concrete enough'.

Let us look now at how comrade Trotsky describes the double defeat of the BKP last year.

He writes this specifically about Bulgaria: 'Last year we suffered two bitter defeats in Bulgaria. Firstly, the party, for fatalistic and doctrinaire reasons, let slip a highly propitious moment for revolutionary action (the peasant insurrection after the June overthrow of Tsankov). Secondly, the party tried to correct

9 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

its mistake by throwing itself into the September uprising without having first taken the necessary political or organisational steps' (p. xii).¹⁰

It is absolutely true that there were two bitter defeats in Bulgaria. Comrade Trotsky's explanation though is only partly correct; it contains such inaccuracies and is so incomplete that it gives a quite inaccurate picture of the events. The reader must ask himself: if at a 'highly propitious moment' ('the peasant insurrection'), the party refused to act, and that this means that it is not suited in general for armed struggle – then how can we explain the fact that three months later it plunged into the insurrection under the most inauspicious conditions? If the party exhibited the courage in September to move for insurrection even in the absence of 'political or organisational steps', this shows that it is not in general unsuited for the struggle; but this then does not explain its passive behaviour in June when the developing situation obliged it to lead the 'insurgent peasants'.

Later (p. lxiv), comrade Trotsky, on the basis of 'the experience of the European struggles, and especially the German struggles of recent years', draws up pictures of 'two types of leader' who are inclined 'to drag the party backwards at the very moment when it should be taking a giant leap forward'.¹¹ The first is the Menshevik type but it 'is not confined to Menshevism, and suddenly turns up, at critical moments, in responsible posts in the most revolutionary party'.¹² This type is a sceptic who sees nought but obstacles, and for him Marxism becomes a 'way of divining the impossibility of revolutionary action'.¹³ The second type is distinguished by a 'superficial, agitational' nature. This type is an optimist who does not see any obstacles at all, and for him 'the ocean is only knee-deep', but 'when the hour of decisive action comes', he 'inevitably becomes the exact opposite'. 'At the decisive moment, they will both join hands – to stand against the insurrection'.¹⁴

If we accept these two types of leader as realistic, then here again comrade Trotsky's theory about leaders is not able to explain the Bulgarian defeats. In June, the responsible position in the party was occupied by a Menshevik type ('democratically fatalistic ideas'), and the party remained inactive despite the 'highly propitious moment' – this is logical. In September, a 'superficial, agitational' type was in the responsible post – the party leadership exhibited

10 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

11 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 135.

12 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 135.

13 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 135.

14 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 135.

reckless optimism, 'without having first taken the necessary political or organisational steps';¹⁵ according to comrade Trotsky's theory, the party, despite the revolutionary agitation of the masses, should hold its position; however, it nonetheless plunged into insurrection – this is not logical.

We can only reach a genuine explanation for the defeats of the ВКР by tracing the path of its development from Social Democracy to Communism.

The old party of 'narrow socialists [*tesniaki*]' joined the Comintern in toto – without any splits and internal upheavals. And more. It also brought almost the entire proletariat of Bulgaria under its exclusive influence. Thanks to its many years of bitter struggle against opportunism, it managed not only to purge itself of any kind of opportunistic elements but also to undermine almost completely the influence of Bulgarian reformists on the worker masses. This was without doubt an enormous service to the party. In all other capitalist countries, the Comintern had to fight against the pernicious influence of Social Democracy which was sometimes strong, sometimes less so; in Bulgaria, it was largely free of this worry. This success was achieved by the Bulgarian Party by following tactics which in 1910 comrade Trotsky had found to be too intransigent, sectarian, and in danger of transforming the party into a 'socialist seminary'; instead of a tireless struggle against opportunism, he, like [Jean] Huysmans and Legin (the inveterate leaders of social treachery), pushed for ... joint work and unification with the 'broad' opportunist parties (see comrade Trotsky's article in *Sotsial-Demokrat*, no. 15–16, 17 (30) September 1910: 'Na Balkanakh i o Balkanakh').¹⁶

However, when the party joined the Comintern, this still did not mean that it was transformed into a genuine Bolshevik party. Although it was always on the left wing of the Second International, and went over to the Zimmerwald Left at the Stockholm Conference (summer 1917), and although it took up the slogans of the October Revolution without any caveats, it nonetheless could not immediately renew itself and free itself completely from its Social-Democratic past.

And just think. In this teeny, economically very backward, petty-bourgeois and peasant country, it was the dogma of the party of the proletariat that on the road to social revolution it would follow the lead of Social Democracy in the large capitalist states. Only after the World War and the October Revolution did it come to the conviction that, given the course of historical development, it could perhaps become the pacesetter of revolution in the Balkans and even

15 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

16 N. Trotskii, 'Na Balkanakh i o Balkanakh', *Sotsial-demokrat*, no. 15–16, 30 September 1910, pp. 10–11.

in Central Europe. It initially perceived and mastered this idea mainly in a theoretical sense, and because of this it turned out to be very difficult to re-educate the party and mobilise it across the board to solve this kind of new task.

It is true that the party had always been close to Russian Social Democracy and had felt its powerful influence, but this influence manifested itself primarily in Marxist theory since the practical tasks of both parties were fundamentally different.

In terms of the kinds of tasks confronting it, the Bulgarian Party was closer to the West-European parties. That is why in both the political and the organisational sense, it was the large parties of the European countries which were the teachers of the Bulgarian Party. After the historical treachery of the Second International, the party, remaining true to international socialism, found a new teacher in the form of the Bolsheviks after the February Revolution.

The Russian comrades provided a new formulation of the peasant question which was completely different from that which the party had come up with under the influence of the Social Democratic Party. But after calling peasants into its ranks for twenty years in the name of their future proletarian interests, the party was given a new task: to approach the peasants in the name of their petty-bourgeois interests today.

The shift from Social-Democratic propaganda among the peasantry to Bolshevik guidance of the political struggle of the peasant masses was difficult and complex. The party studiously learned this new art and really made great strides. Last year's events, however, showed that this lesson was not enough.

In April 1922, when it became very clear that the Bulgarian bourgeoisie was in cahoots with the Wrangelites against the peasant government, and when a powerful popular movement led by the Communist Party began, the council of the party (the plenum of the CC) adopted the following resolution:

Any attempt by the bourgeoisie to stage a coup, even if directed at a peasant government, also directly threatens the Communist Party. Seizure of power by bourgeois parties represents a great danger for the revolutionary movement. Therefore, the Communist Party, defending itself and the revolutionary movement, opposes with weapons at the ready any attempt at a coup by the bourgeoisie. Although any political agreement between the Communist Party and the Agrarian Union is now impossible, technical collaboration between them is permissible.¹⁷

17 I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

As if there was not a hint of 'neutrality' at that time. The movement of the masses permitted the party to choose the correct position. On the basis of this resolution, the party was mobilised repeatedly at moments of distress.

In June 1923, no popular movement existed. The peasant masses, after [Aleksandar] Stamboliiskii's brilliant electoral victory, quietly went about their work in the fields. The bourgeoisie seemed completely demoralised. Stamboliiskii prepared to attack the Communists. The party organised itself against this campaign and knew nothing about the impending coup. And suddenly on 9 June the party found itself under Tsankov's banner. Triumphant cries from the petty bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia resounded in the streets of the capital. The coup caught the Agrarian Union by surprise as well. Under these conditions, having sensed the pressure of the masses, the CC of the party vacillated, and, without even checking how the peasant masses would in fact react to the events taking place, came to the wrong conclusion not to fight. Having completely ignored the role of the party as the revolutionary vanguard, and having underestimated its enormous authority among the masses, the CC declared the ill-fated 'neutrality of the party in the struggle between the town and village bourgeoisie'.¹⁸ This resulted in the bitter defeat of the party and a cheap bourgeois victory. In a similar situation a year ago, when the movement of the masses was evident, the party took the right decision. But after a year, when the movement had subsided, and the enemy had acted completely conspiratorially, it 'drift[ed] along on the current'.¹⁹ Clearly, the party did not yet have the ability to get its bearings quickly in the situation and to decide quickly to take action. This time the old habits of long years of Social-Democratic propaganda reasserted themselves in us.

Comrade Trotsky finds this moment 'highly propitious' for the action of the party. It is true in the sense that it was chosen by the enemy, and chosen well. The party made a colossal mistake. Immediately after the events, it was still not generally aware of it: the party council unanimously endorsed the position taken by the CC; but after the September uprising, the most responsible members of the CC recognised their mistake. In October 1923, Comrade [Dimitar] Blagoev was still declaring the following:

The party made a tactical error on 9 June, and this mistake was the cause of two developments:

¹⁸ I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

¹⁹ This phrase from Trotsky's piece is frequently invoked in this polemic (Trotsky, Document 1, p. 136).

a) wrong information from the intelligence service which groundlessly informed the CC that there was no danger, and

b) certainty that Stamboliiskii's government had finally lost the confidence of the masses, and that rendering aid to him in a joint struggle against the bourgeoisie compromises the party.

When this question was resolved before the Party Council on 9 June, I, due to illness, was unable to attend its meetings and learned about the motives for its decisions after 9 June. In any event, it was a tactical mistake in relation to 9 June, but it was mainly a consequence of the aforementioned causes. In this case, it is undoubtedly necessary to acknowledge the mistake.²⁰

Comrade [Khristo] Kabakchiev, the political secretary of the party immediately after September, expressed the same thought:

We must acknowledge that 9 June was a tactical error by the party. The party did not adequately appreciate the difference between the Agrarian Union and the bourgeoisie. On 9 June, the party should have thrown itself decisively into the struggle, together with the Agrarian Union, against the bourgeoisie, under the slogan of a worker-peasant government, but with the understanding that, should this not be achieved, the agrarian government would be preserved, and we would endeavour to get more concessions from it.

The error, though, began before 9 June. In spite of its struggle against the agrarian government, the party, in its struggle with the bourgeoisie, had to be entirely on its side. While the party recognised in theory the power of the bourgeoisie and the danger it threatened, it underestimated both in practice, became bogged down in the electoral and legal struggle and did not prepare itself seriously enough to avert the coup; therefore it was caught unawares by 9 June and turned out to unprepared.

The party, however, quickly drew the correct conclusions from 9 June and found the correct path. Recognition of the tactical error of 9 June will foster solidarity with the International and will eliminate any reason for a split inside the party.²¹

20 I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

21 I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

Subsequent events rapidly brought us to the September defeat. On this, comrade Trotsky wrote: 'the party tried to correct its mistake by throwing itself into the September uprising without first taking the necessary political or organisational steps'.²²

This explanation seems to suggest that the party was somehow too irresponsible to correct the mistake it made – it went into an armed struggle without having taken appropriate measures to ensure success. From comrade Trotsky's words, the September uprising might seem like an adventure. Comrade Trotsky must express himself more clearly on this point, for the unclarity of his explanation can only benefit our enemies. Given the evidence from all the sources on the September uprising, there is no room for any doubt at all. The September events were nothing less than a bloody provocation by a White Guard government. Even the European bourgeoisie recognised that. It is enough to glance at the following excerpt from the newspaper *Mir* (one of the most influential organs of the Bulgarian government) from 7 September 1923, i.e. five days before the events: 'We must finish with communism in Bulgaria now, at the moment when it is experiencing a crisis, when it has been disarmed, when it is still only preparing to commit a crime. Not to take this suitable opportunity would be to make an unforgivable mistake which will take many victims to rectify'.²³

The White Guard government (around which all bourgeois parties grouped, including Social Democracy) could not be certain of the stability of its power or of its success in the upcoming elections while the Communist colossus, the centre of organisation among the town and village labouring masses, was still standing. It was essential for the bourgeoisie to attack the party, and the moment was beneficial. That is how the September provocation happened.

At that moment the Communist Party was not thinking at all about rectifying past mistakes in order not to repeat the June error this time with fatal consequences, but was thinking about not letting themselves be destroyed without a struggle and not leaving the fighting masses without any support and leadership: the party had no freedom of choice. Let comrade Trotsky say it clearly: even recognising that it was inadequately prepared politically and organisationally, should the party have thrown itself into the uprising, or not? The party itself has found that it acted correctly. The actions of the masses after the uprising showed that they too approved of the party's stance. The Comintern was

22 Trotsky, Document 1, p. ??.

23 I have been unable to locate the author or title of this article.

also unanimous on this count. If comrade Trotsky has a different opinion, he must offer very, very strong evidence to convince the world that he is correct.

It is correct that the party was not ready for a decisive battle at that moment. Perceiving the threat, it prepared itself both politically and organisationally. It drew some lessons from the experience of the June Days. However, it did not manage to prepare itself well, and not in good time. Only in the course of the uprising itself were a multitude of deficiencies revealed which the party had not recognised earlier.

There is nothing surprising in this. The revolutionary activity of a party, which developed and grew in conditions of Social-Democratic activity, must not be measured by the yardstick of the party of the Russian Bolsheviks, an experienced and tested party with a long revolutionary struggle behind it, one which has carried out three revolutions. It is true that this party had among its assets many mass demonstrations and not a few serious clashes with the organs of power; this was however its first attempt at an armed uprising. The strategy of the best generals is not enough to secure victory in an uprising: the experience of the party and the masses is also necessary.

III The Comintern and the Events in Bulgaria

Drawing several comparisons (the events in Bulgaria and the Russian October) and parallels (the mistakes of the ВКР during these events and the mistakes of some comrades during October), comrade Trotsky certainly lays some responsibility for the Bulgarian defeats on some well-known Russian comrades. But this is even clearer from his explanation of the September defeat: 'the party tried to correct its mistake by throwing itself into the September uprising without first taking the necessary [...] steps', etc.²⁴ The party believed that it had acted correctly in June. The Comintern cursed it roundly for this. And the party, not thinking too long about it ('not prepared', etc.), 'trying to correct its mistake', used the first available pretext, and plunged into the fire and suffered defeat. The link between the behaviour of the Comintern and the September actions of the ВКР was clear. Ergo, the leaders of the Comintern bear responsibility for the September defeat. This is the conclusion the reader should draw if they read comrade Trotsky's commentary carefully.

²⁴ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'political or organisational'.

I mentioned above: the aim of these kinds of obvious innuendos can only be to provoke a struggle inside the РКР(b); they are categorically contradicted by the facts. Indeed, these are the facts of the matter:

1. When Moscow heard the news of the White Guard coup, everybody in the Executive Committee of the Comintern thought that the Bulgarian Party was acting decisively against the coup, but since unverified reports already began to surface in the first days that apparently the party had declared itself 'neutral', and that the CC was disrupting the struggle of the workers of the town of Plevna, the following warning was sent in the name of the ECCI to the CC of the party:

Moscow, 14 June 1923

To the CC of the Bulgarian Communist Party. Sofia.

Alarming news that you are disrupting the struggle in Plevna against the new government. Is this news true? As far as we can judge from here, the situation demands united and decisive action even with Stamboliiskii. Otherwise the current government will become stronger and crush the communists. Think seriously about the situation, remember the tactics of the Bolsheviks at the moment of the Kornilov revolt, and act without hesitation.

Zinoviev, Kolarov²⁵

The IKKI was evidently unable to send the party a concrete directive: it found itself far removed from the theatre of events and did not have all the necessary facts. Therefore it conveyed only a warning. But, as anyone can judge, this warning indicated the only correct tactic at that moment. The CC however did not agree with the IKKI.

Comrade Trotsky draws an analogy between the Bulgarian events and the Russian October. The IKKI likened the June situation in Bulgaria to the Kornilov days. This analogy is without doubt correct.

2. In this concluding speech to the plenum of the IKKI on 15 June 1923, comrade Zinoviev said the following, among other things, about the Bulgarian events:

If this news (the news that the party is maintaining 'neutrality') is confirmed, this would be a great mistake. Now we ourselves would have had to form an alliance with the damned Stamboliiskii. The Bolsheviks did not march with Kerensky against Kornilov ... We are far removed from

25 I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

the theatre of the struggle, we cannot provide any directives from here, but we must draw the attention of the Bulgarian Party to the danger.

Protokol der Konferenz der erweiterten Exekutive der Kom. Int., Moscow, 12–23 June 1923, p. 101²⁶

3. On 23 June, comrade Radek, at the behest of the Presidium of the IKKI, reported at a meeting of the same plenum of the IKKI 'On the Coup d'État in Bulgaria and the CP' in the spirit of Zinoviev and Kolarov's first telegram. He described in detail the state of forces inside the country and on the international situation of Bulgaria at the moment of the coup and came to the conclusion that the party could 'alone or in alliance with the agrarianists successfully oppose the White Guard coup'. Taking into consideration the causes of the party's defeat, he further pointed out its incorrect attitude towards the peasants, its erroneous position on the national question, and, mainly, that 'it turned out to be incapable at this historical moment of moving from agitation and opposition to action'. Comrade Radek termed the defeat of the party 'decisive'.²⁷

Comrade Radek's criticism was essentially correct, if a little overstated. Particularly overstated was his evaluation of the scale of the party's defeat, which in turn shaped the exaggerated idea of the party's inadequacies. After its 'decisive defeat' in June, the party was able nonetheless to take part in the armed uprising in September. And after its heavy defeat in September, it still did not turn out to be decisively defeated: comrade Tsankov reliably attests to this.

4. At the suggestion of comrade Radek, the IKKI adopted the 'Appeal to the Bulgarian Workers and Peasants', drawn up in the spirit of the decrees of the presidium of the IKKI.

The IKKI, working from the suggestion that the struggle of the masses against the coup was continuing, called for future struggle: 'The sponsors of the coup are the enemy. It must be defeated. Come together in the struggle against the White Guard coup not only with the broad peasant masses but also with the old leaders of the Agrarian Union. Show them where a split between the workers and the peasants leads, and call them to a joint struggle for a worker-peasant government' (*Protokol der Konfer. etc.*, p. 247).²⁸

This appeal, adopted on 23 June, became known to the party – the government newspapers printed it – only in the middle of July when the revolutionary

²⁶ *Protokoll* 1923, p. 101.

²⁷ *Protokoll* 1923, p. 270.

²⁸ *Protokoll* 1923, p. 276.

movement had long since been liquidated, and so it did not achieve its practical aim. Nonetheless, in a highly potent way it pointed out the party's great mistake.

5. At the behest of the ИККИ, comrade Zinoviev on 2 July 1923 sent an 'open letter' to the CC of the party. It pointed out the capital error of the party, decisively rejected the 'theory of neutrality', and stressed the enormous harm this theory could do in the Comintern. 'In our opinion', the letter concludes,

we must above all do the following:

- 1) Acknowledge the mistake you made when you promoted the theory of neutrality, and speak openly about this to the party.
- 2) Without respite, prepare for the illegal period of the party. It is quite clear that the party will be forced underground if it has not yet already been forced there.
- 3) Prepare an agreement with the peasant elements, including the surviving leaders of Stamboliiskii's party.²⁹

In the spirit of this letter, comrade Zinoviev published a detailed article as well. Other comrades also wrote articles.

As a consequence, some comrades rebuked the ИККИ for launching its sharp criticism openly, for the eyes of the enemy, at a time when the party was being subjected to the cruellest persecution. This rebuke was not justified. This was about errors which could potentially cause colossal harm on an international scale.

6. Finally, the following must also be added: the author of these lines had left Moscow for Bulgaria on 17 June. He arrived there on 24th of the same month. He had no kind of charge from the ИККИ to foment an uprising at that time. He knew the ИККИ's position on the tactics of the party – and this was his position as well. Nothing more. He went as a responsible activist of the ВКР to help, as he understood it, to straighten out the political line of the party. When he was there, he found that the movement that had been sparked by the coup had been crushed. A new situation had developed, demanding a rapid and correct orientation. The party was threatened by an internal crisis which had to be prevented. The efforts of the author of these lines were directed at resolving this dual task. In mid-August, he requested permission to travel to Moscow, but

29 Although not the source for this 'open letter', Zinoviev elaborates on these same points in G. Zinov'ev, 'Uroki Bolgarskogo perevorota. Vnimaniiu seksii Kominterna', *Pravda*, no. 147, 4 July 1923, pp. 2–3.

the government did not give him permission to leave. This fact shows on the one hand that the party was not considering any kind of uprising in September, and on the other that the government was devising its own provocation. When it emerged that the destruction of the party was imminent, and that the latter needed to mobilise all its forces to meet the attack – this was at the start of September – I had to stay in the country.

Those are the facts. Their meaning is crystal clear. The IKKI tried to exert influence on the CC of the party by correcting its erroneous position. However, because it was far away and because the movement was quickly crushed, it was not successful right away. But the IKKI did a great deal to make the party recognise its mistake and avoid it in the future. No one today can dispute the correctness of the criticism levelled by the IKKI. Since the speech is about September – the IKKI warned the party that it was facing destruction and invited it to prepare more quickly for the underground. This warning was both appropriate and timely. The storm came very quickly, and the IKKI could not do any more than this.

How, after all this, could anyone get the idea into their head that the criticism and warnings of the IKKI could, directly or indirectly, have led to the September defeats? Comrade Trotsky is completely wrong to link the September events to an effort by the party to correct its own June mistake. You cannot correct that kind of mistake. After all, it was not a mistake that occurred while solving some kind of mathematical problem. The party could do only one thing: recognise the mistake so as not to repeat it in the future. Unfortunately, before September the party leadership did not acknowledge that it had made an error. Consequently, there could be no talk of endeavouring to correct something which was not considered to be a mistake. When the Tsankov clique launched its frontal attack on the party, and the masses, embittered, began to rise up, the party faced the vital question: to act or not to move a muscle, to go into battle or not resist, and to be trodden under foot, destroyed and buried in battle? At this moment it really remembered the Comintern, October, and the fact that it was a revolutionary party, and that only as that could it gain huge influence over the masses, and only as that could it be at the head of the masses in the future. The masses themselves let it know what to do. And it decided that it had to fight energetically, and armed uprising was the only possible form of struggle in the situation that had developed. And it threw itself into the uprising that had already been sparked by the masses themselves, although it was fully aware that it was inadequately prepared. In the evaluation of the situation and in the determination of its tasks, it turned out, despite its defeat, to be right this time, and the IKKI approved of its conduct.

And future events showed that the party was right this time. The party began to grow stronger, despite the terrible repression, the shootings, and other sacrifices. The party has been tempered. The party is growing stronger. Even legal elections under the White Terror show that the masses are with us. The party has survived the test and is rapidly becoming truly Bolshevik.

The ВКР and its leaders assume full and exclusive responsibility for all its decisions and for all its actions and shortcomings during last year's events in Bulgaria. To the leaders of the Comintern, who helped the party acknowledge its mistake, straighten out its political line, and reunify its ranks – to those who gave it the true 'lessons of October' – they express their comradely gratitude.

‘Letter to Comrades’¹

*Leopol'd Averbakh, An. Shokhin, B. Treivas, N. Pen'kov, V. Dalin,
M. Fedorov, M. Dugachev, F. Deliusin, A. Bezymenskii*

The authors of this letter were among those comrades in last year's party discussion who declared that comrade Trotsky's political line was correct. At that time, we all supported it against a letter from the CC of the RLKSM [Komsomol],² and considered it our duty to speak out as active Komsomol officials. We consider it our duty to speak out again today when the entire party and Leninist Komsomol are discussing comrade Trotsky's new action. For all who are unbiased, for all who are able – even if with a heavy and painful heart – to cast off their personal sympathies, it is clear that comrade Trotsky with his ‘The Lessons of October’ is clearly posing a question about the party's future leadership, and that we are all confronted with the need to choose between two lines: the line of Bolshevism and the CC, and the line of comrade Trotsky.

And in light of ‘The Lessons of October’, last year's party discussion looks completely different to us. We can now see that the questions we discussed in the winter must not be considered in isolation. We can now understand that in the last discussion there was a link in that chain leading to 1917. In light of today's events, it is clear to us that in last year's discussions as well a Trotskyism was manifesting itself which had not broken with its pre-revolutionary mistakes, but instead was trying to correct the party in the spirit of those mistakes. Trotskyism's struggle for the leadership of the party became completely obvious after the death of Vladimir Il'ich.

If a tendency develops in the party apparently over individual issues at first but then comes to contradict Leninism more and more as it develops, then any conciliationism, any vacillations, indecisiveness and dithering are impermissible for a Bolshevik. We must choose. Remembering this, we consider it our duty to declare that we are for Leninism, against Trotskyism, that we are with the entire party.

¹ Leopol'd Averbakh, An. Shokhin, B. Treivas, N. Pen'kov, V. Dalin, M. Fedorov, M. Dugachev, F. Deliusin, A. Bezymenskii, ‘Pis'mo k tovarishcham’, *Pravda*, no. 291, 21 December 1924, p. 5.

² Komsomol, Document 4, pp. 163–8.

The pressure of the petty bourgeoisie on our party in the current situation is especially great. It is clear to us that comrade Trotsky's action, even if unwitting, is nothing more than a reflection of the rise, the growth, the political activeness of the petty bourgeoisie. After all, not by chance is Dan in *Sotsialisticheskii vestnik* using comrade Trotsky's position to argue that a political 'NEP' is needed, and that the dictatorship of the proletariat must be brought to an end. On the other hand, historical analysis of the class nature of the tendencies in the last discussion shows that the entire party today opposes comrade Trotsky who has lost even those supporters he once had in it. Today, we have on the one hand the party, and on the other comrade Trotsky's tendency, his deviation, the rebirth of Trotskyism.

It is particularly painful to go through these disagreements with comrade Trotsky. The youth, which came of age during the revolution and did not know the history of the party, matured mainly through practical work, and valued comrade Trotsky's service very highly, and not all of this younger generation was able to grasp immediately the significance of comrade Trotsky's statements in the 1923 discussion. But comrade Trotsky's personal authority must not obscure those mistakes which he is making now. In the history of our party, there are a number of instances where the Bolsheviks had to come out against people who had earlier played a major role in its work and life.

For those young people who had supported comrade Trotsky, the past year has become a year to ponder and acknowledge their past mistakes, a year to work through the fundamental questions of Bolshevism. We think that our statement is indicative of the breakthrough made by the youth, indicative of its Bolshevik unity today.

Precisely in order that the entire youth will have no doubts at all about the significance and nature of comrade Trotsky's action, and in order that the entire party, unified on the basis of Leninism, might persuade comrade Trotsky to recognise his own mistakes and come together with the whole party – we have acted because it is the duty of every party member to speak openly about their own mistakes.

During the discussion, and after it, we had to consider what the party would have been like if the 'opposition' had won. There can be no doubt at all that this would have led to a bitter struggle inside the party, the breaking of its Bolshevik backbone, and the loss of influence among the worker masses. But if this had happened, should we support those who, not directly but indirectly, nonetheless keep up a state of semi-war in the party, constantly pitting two lines against each other?

In particular, we were wrong on the question of the youth. After a dozen uncontroversial decrees about the independent activity of the youth, about the

fact that party democracy, especially under present conditions, is the highest form of Bolshevik education of the youth, we did not see the clash of the generations. When comrade Trotsky advanced the idea that the younger generation was in conflict with the apparatus of the party, i.e. *with the basic cadres of the pre-October generation* – he was leading that generation along a path that was not Bolshevik.

There is no room in the Bolshevik party for a struggle between the generations. Even comrade Trotsky wrote after the discussion: 'The party, which scales the heights of the revolutionary tasks of the class, thereby also takes on the task of the revolutionary education of the youth. It is the correct and far-sighted policy of the party in this area to eliminate completely the very issue of fathers and children in the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat, or at least to reduce it to a minimum'.³ In the conditions of party life today, it is not a question of whether the youth can develop, can be educated in the necessary manner – that is not the issue. The issue today is that our youth must be educated according to Bolshevik principles. In the last discussion, we, together with the whole party, understood the need to move towards party democracy which was developed as a contrast to the preceding period. But by defending internal party democracy as the best form of Bolshevik education under those conditions, we erred, firstly because we directed this demand against the CC, and secondly because in the mouths of the opposition this demand took on a completely peculiar, Trotskyist character (the issue of factions and groupings, of the apparatus, etc.). Today we still have to struggle against bureaucratism, against certain negative phenomena which have especially stirred up the youth, and we still have to develop party democracy. But the party will be able to resolve these issues only through Bolshevik means.

Comrade Trotsky's vestigial Social-Democratic thinking on the question of the youth means primarily that he is transferring the struggle between the younger and the older generation, which was inevitable in the era of the opportunistic degeneration of the party, to the Comintern, which is protecting itself from degeneration with all its being, with all its revolutionary activity.

The danger of the degeneration of some sectors of our party is completely understandable. In theory it is quite possible. The party must keep its eye on this danger, it must nip any degenerations in the bud, analyse them, focus broad attention on them. It is quite natural that last winter the quarrels were the worst on precisely this issue among the younger generation. For those who imagined a kind of sum total of committees made up of self-contained 'apparatchiks'

3 See Trotsky's introduction to Averbakh 1924.

whenever they thought of the party – for those people, its degeneration, its peril were inflated to stunning proportions. The root of the opposition's mistake lies in its estimation of the party. On the one hand, here again we poorly appreciated that the question posed by comrade Trotsky was not an abstract historical one, it was not a warning to the party about its fate, but it was a mark of its leading circles, its old guard. The vital work of the party is the steady realisation of the resolutions of the Thirteenth Congress, the pursuit of the correct Leninist policy in all areas, the future increase in the proletarian component of the party, the unceasing activation of the masses, the tough, clear struggle against all deviations, and, first and foremost, against Trotskyism – in short, the bolshevisation of our party, and moreover this is the only guarantee against the risk of degeneration.

Finally, it is worthwhile explaining our position on the 'neutrality' of the Komsomol. It is well-known that a number of comrades during the last discussion did not deem it necessary for the Komsomol to intervene in it. But the League acted nonetheless, and not without some disagreements. We consider the most important component of the Leninist education of the youth to be the discussion by the League, as an arm of the party and guided by its leadership, of the current questions, and we consider that the struggle against individual deviations must be a fundamental part of this educational work. Under the conditions of the inevitable rebirth of the petty-bourgeois deviations, the Komsomol, in its struggle for Bolshevism, must put Leninism into practice.

On the basis of the above, we support the letter of the CC, MK and LK RLKSM about 'The Lessons of October'.⁴

4 Recently, the authors of this letter worked in various parts of the USSR. Delayed by the general discussion of the letter, it is appearing in print only now [original footnote]. [See Document 4].

‘The Autobiography of Trotskyism’¹

G. Safarov

I

This collection of materials² is needed more as an afterword than as an introduction.

And for obvious reasons. Broad circles in our party are almost completely ignorant of the bitter struggle waged by Trotsky under the banner of Menshevism against Lenin and Leninism since 1903, the moment of the emergence of the Menshevik trend, to 1917, the moment of its collapse.

We have set ourselves the task *of making Trotskyism speak for itself in its own language*. We think it will be useful to purge the party consciousness once and for all of the hypnosis of pompous ‘leftist’ rhetoric which is rife with the most shameless opportunism.

The material we are citing here must not be understood as merely accidental manifestations of polemical impulsiveness. The reader of our collection will recognise not only the old and unchanged lexicon of Trotskyism, not only its ‘leftist’ phraseology, but also that evasively opportunistic, cravenly unprincipled formulation of all the questions of the proletarian struggle which even in this past year is again trying to claim some credit for itself in the ranks of the Leninist party.

With hindsight Trotsky is now sanctimoniously trying to correct his mistakes in the Brest era and in the argument about trade unions, as well as his old *Menshevik* views.

He has enough polemical irresponsibility and ‘extra-factional’ abandon to write his own shamefully renegade ‘Lessons of October’.

1 G. Safarov, ‘Avtobiografiia Trotskizma (vmesto poslesloviia)’, in *Trotskii o Lenine i Leninizme*, 1925, pp. 3–36. For the sake of clarity, I have consecutively numbered the footnotes, even though they are numbered by the page in the original. Many of the themes developed here are repeated again in G. Safarov, ‘Trotskizm ili Leninizm’, in *Za Leninizm, protiv Trotskizma* 1925, pp. 136–91.

2 We would like to give special thanks to comrade V. Iu. Belov for his assistance on this work [original footnote].

Let the entire party, as one, universally recognise that *Trotskyism, now challenging Lenin's and Leninism's historical claim to October, is nothing more than the theory and politics of petty-bourgeois, intelligentsia opportunism, the ideology of the absence of character in the intelligentsia, burning down today what they bowed down to yesterday, and burning down tomorrow what they bow down to today.*

In 'The Lessons of October' we encounter the following concluding chord:

study of disagreements cannot and should not in any way be seen as an attack on those comrades who were pursuing a false [*lozhnyi*] policy.³ On the other hand, it would be intolerable to erase (!) the greatest chapter from the history of the party, just because not all members of the party kept pace with the revolutionary proletariat. *The party can and must know its entire past if it is to be able to evaluate it correctly and assign proper significance to each part of it. The tradition of a revolutionary party is built not on evasions, but on critical clarity.*⁴

Oh, we completely agree with this. That is precisely why our collection is needed more as an afterword than as an introduction: let's give Trotskyism the place it actually earned!

This is even more urgent now that Trotsky no longer deems it necessary to conceal his true intentions.

'History', declares Trotsky,

provided our party with truly inestimable revolutionary advantages. The traditions of the heroic struggle against tsarism; the habits and methods of revolutionary self-sacrifice, bound up with the conditions of the underground; the broad theoretical examination of the revolutionary experience of all mankind; *the struggle against Menshevism*; [...] the struggle against conciliationism (!); the supreme experience of the 1905 revolution; the theoretical assimilation of this experience during the years of counter-revolution; *the approach to problems of the international labour movement in light of the revolutionary lessons of 1905* – taken together, these tempered our party in an exceptional way, giving it the most penetrating theoretical insight and unparalleled revolutionary sweep. *And yet, even in this party, in its upper reaches, before the moment of decisive actions, a group of exper-*

3 It is well-known that hypocrisy is the homage that vice pays to virtue! [original footnote].

4 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 133 [original emphasis].

*ience revolutionaries, Old Bolsheviks, formed from among its leaders, who were sharply opposed to a proletarian overthrow and, in the course of the most critical period of the revolution from February 1917 to approximately February 1918, took an essentially Social-Democratic position on all fundamental questions.*⁵

The slanderous nature of this attack on the Bolshevik Party is already clear enough. But the entire tirade is highly typical of Trotsky.

'The struggle against Menshevism; the struggle against conciliationism', you say, forged 'our' party?

And where were you, comrade Trotsky, in this struggle? Weren't you the most nimble, i.e. the most 'leftist', cover for Menshevism? Weren't you the most talented, although – let's put it in quotation marks, also the most ... sterile representative of conciliationism? And now you place yourself at the service of us sinful Bolsheviks so that we can learn 'the approach to the problems of the international labour movement in light of the revolutionary lessons of 1905'.⁶

You are nobly disinterested. But wasn't it you who wrote *against Lenin* during the war: 'The politics of circle selection and sectarian intransigence, of the kind being conducted by *Sotsial-demokrat*,⁷ is an attempt to force the viewpoint of a united literary group on the party, a viewpoint which is by no means theoretically well-founded in general terms, is untested by life, and is in many ways antithetical to the left wing of the International. This politics is capable only of introducing disorganisation into the camp of the Internationalists'.⁸

Surely you have not forgotten how you showed the whole world that 'in relation to the new questions and tasks, the old factional organisational heritage of our (?) party acts as an *extremely reactionary force*'.⁹

5 L. Trotskii, 1917, 'Uroki Oktiabria', (vmesto vvedniia), p. LXII [original footnote]. [Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 133–4 [original emphasis]. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'the struggle against Populism'].

6 Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 133–4.

7 The Central Organ of our party that was published during the war and edited by comrades Lenin and Zinoviev [original footnote].

8 *Nashe slovo*, 23 July 1915, 'Nasha pozitsiia', – 'Nasha fraktsiia i zadachi russkikh interatsionalistov' [original footnote]. ['Nasha positsiia. Nasha fraktsiia i zadachi russkikh interatsionalistov', *Nashe slovo*, no. 146, 23 July 1915, p. 1].

9 *Nashe slovo*, 23 July 1915, 'Nasha pozitsiia', – 'Nasha fraktsiia i zadachi russkikh interatsionalistov' [original footnote]. ['Nasha positsiia. Nasha fraktsiia i zadachi russkikh interatsionalistov', *Nashe slovo*, no. 146, 23 July 1915, p. 1].

Didn't you reproach the *Sotsial-Demokrat* 'group' for 'circle ad-libbing, by means of which it endeavours to artificially split the Russian internationalists'.¹⁰

Stop dressing up in other people's clothes!

All the while you *hide your own Menshevik vacillations from the party*, glossing over them like some minor 'misunderstanding' over organisational matters.

Just as the political development of Menshevism as a whole from the days of its birth to its collapse, from 1903 to 1917, represents a *continuous* line, the political development of our homemade variety of Menshevism – Trotskyism – offers a unified, complete picture.

If we do not look at history with an excess of tsarist disdain, if we do not attempt to reduce it to a system of 'great people' à la Ilovaiskii, the development of Trotskyism – from Martov at the Second Congress of the RSDRP up to the present time – presents itself to us as a logically connected whole. Its *opportunistic lack of character* is revealed in its vacillations, in the leftist gesturings of Trotskyism in the pursuit of rightist policies.

These fatal features indelibly mark the entire political career of Trotskyism.

Il'ich considered this to be the most typical and telling aspect of Trotskyism. He attributed Trotsky's 'Tushino turncoats' to quite concrete causes. '*Such types are characteristic of the flotsam of past historical formations, of the time when the mass, working-class movement in Russia was still dormant, and when every group had "ample room" in which to pose as a trend, group or faction, in short, as a "power"; negotiating amalgamation with others*'.¹¹

Just recall Trotsky's endless proclivity for ascribing his turns away from the working class to the '*immaturity*' of the party, the proletariat, the revolution, and you will immediately see how completely accurate this is.

In the 1904 pamphlet *Our Political Tasks*, the manifesto of Russian Menshevism, Trotsky eloquently pointed his finger at none other than comrade Lenin, attributing the appearance of Bolshevism in the ranks of the workers' movement to the '*immaturity*' of the proletariat.

At that time, the Menshevik Cicero thundered against Lenin:

It is necessary to understand, sir, that the entire class develops steadily but slowly; slowly, but steadily (!). It is necessary to understand that

10 *Nashe slovo*, 6 October 1915 [original footnote]. [N. T., 'Nashi gruppirovki (iz zapisnoi knizhki)', *Nashe slovo*, no. 209, 6 October 1915, p. 1].

11 Lenin. *Sobr. soch.*, v. XII, part 2. – 'O narushenii edinstva, prikyvaemom krikami o edinstvo', p. 463 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1964y, p. 347].

our political successes are based and can only be based on the level of proletarian consciousness. *It is necessary once and for all to repudiate any 'accelerated' methods of political substitutionism. Whoever cannot tolerate this, and whoever wants to find other guarantees – not on the basis of class, but in an organisational conspiratorial elite, – they can leave us today, because tomorrow they will be driven from us anyway by the 'slow but steady' logic of proletarian development. Where will they go? To the anarchists or to the reformists – who can say?*¹²

Even while preaching 'with slow steps, by faithful zigzags, move quietly onwards, worker nation', Trotsky was contriving to make the revolutionary proletariat ... into his own pedestal!

'The one who can accept this should accept it' ...¹³

When the 1905–7 revolution failed to take Trotsky's 'middle' path, but, having betrayed his hopes, achieved a number of major successes for Bolshevism, Trotsky ran to the German Social Democrats to complain about our unreadiness. "It is an illusion" to imagine that Menshevism and Bolshevism "have struck deep roots in the depths of the proletariat". That is how the champion of the theory of 'permanent socialist revolution' explained his departure in 1911 to the service of the liquidationists.¹⁴

Having sunk to the level of organisational and political cohabitation with the journal of the traitors of the revolution and socialism, *Nasha Zaria* [*Our Dawn*], L.D. Trotsky engaged in the most didactic declamations on the pages of this paper. To those people who cried 'Down with the underground', he softly replied half in agreement: 'Our current organisational forms lag *to a great degree* behind the political consciousness of the advance stratum of the workers and thereby have a *deleterious effect* on this consciousness'.¹⁵

12 N. Trotskii. *Nashi politicheskie zadachi*, Geneva, 1904, p. 106 [original footnote]. [L.D. Trotskii 1928, pp. 206–7. The relevant section has not been translated in the English editions of this work, see, for example, Trotsky 1980b].

13 *The Bible*, New International Version, Matthew 19:10–12. The complete quotation is illuminating here: 'For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others – and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it'.

14 See Lenin, 'Istoricheskii smysl vnutripartiinnoi bor'by v Rossii', v. XI, part 2 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1963h, p. 375].

15 Trotskii, 'Neotlozhnye voprosy', *Nasha zaria*, no. 11, 1911, p. 121 [original footnote]. [L. Trotskii, 'Neotlozhnye voprosy', *Nasha zaria*, no. 11, 1911, p. 121].

He was merciless on the Leninists. Soft as putty on the renegades, he was thunder and lightning on Bolshevism!

And more:

The factional-circle struggle against liquidationism, which has been distinguished in recent times by its common features: political impotence, organisational irresponsibility and ethical promiscuity, has taken place however under a well-defined, formally complete slogan: the struggle for the right of an illegal centralised organisation against legalism whatever the cost. Not a trace is left of this initial 'clarity'.

*The most dreadful collapse of the old Bolshevik faction was the external manifestation of its frantic 'struggle for power' – under new conditions and in the absence of special principled factional tasks that would have justified this struggle to a certain degree.*¹⁶

In 1911, in the legal journal of the liquidationists, Trotsky celebrated the fact that the liquidators had managed to destroy the party!

However, 'that umbrella for all weather', Trotskyism, was not able to maintain that, let's say, position *when Bolshevism began to succeed decisively in the 1912–14 period*.

On 7 February 1913, Trotsky, having helped the liquidationists destroy all general party institutions and having elevated the liquidationist 'August Bloc' set up by the conference of liquidationists in August 1912, wrote a letter to the editors of *Nasha zaria* announcing his departure with a generous clarification: 'It is not for this reason that I hope my departure from "N.z." is not described as a "break with liquidationism," – essentially it means only that I do not want to take responsibility for liquidationism as such, after the framework of party collaboration with liquidationism has been created'.¹⁷

As we are not sure whether this letter will be included in the complete collected works of L.D. Trotsky, we have included it in our own collection of materials.

It is all the more timely that in 'The Lessons of October' Trotsky dares to cast the pall of political duplicity on comrade Lenin.¹⁸

16 *Nasha zaria*, pp. 123–4 [original footnote]. [L. Trotskii, 'Neotlozhnye voprosy', *Nasha zaria*, no. 11, 1911, pp. 123–4].

17 *Pis'ma Martova i Aksel'roda*, p. 274 [original footnote]. ['Iu. O. Martov – F. I. Danu', in *Pis'ma* 1924, p. 274, n. 6].

18 See our brochure *Leninizm ili Trotskizm?* [original footnote]. [*Leninizm Ili Trotskizm?* 1924].

By 1914, the form of the 'political immaturity of the Russian proletariat', that was impeding the victory of Trotskyism, was being modified once more.

In the journal *Bor'ba*,¹⁹ Trotsky convinced the proletarian Bolsheviks that everything will be fine if, first, they united with the liquidationists, and second, they recognised the primacy over all the trends ... of Trotsky and his small group of like-thinkers headed by the infamous Noi Zhordaniia.

'The entire experience of our, and not only our, development', Trotsky stated,

shows that unity cannot be maintained on the basis of consent, on a naked compromise between two centrifugal factions: their battle for influence inevitably wrecks any compromise. The abiding principle of subordinating the minority to the majority does not in itself solve the problem either: not just because the absence of formal organisations²⁰ means that it is difficult to determine a real majority and minority,²¹ but primarily because the minority, isolated by total alienation and enmity from the majority and not pressured by a public opinion in the party, always feels its hands tied for infringing on discipline.²² *True unity can exist only if the party, in addition to the two wings, has a backbone, a Marxist centre, which ideologically overcomes the centrifugal tendencies of the right and left wings and which becomes a bulwark of party public opinion and party discipline.*²³

'The Marxist centre' is maturity and wisdom itself; its '*Marxist tactics chemically (!?) combined the reformist and revolutionary tendencies of the proletarian struggle*';²⁴ this is Trotskyism itself, with its unprincipled half-heartedness, organisational fuzziness, 'leftist' lore, and passive opportunism in reality.

To marry the 'immature labour movement' with Trotskyism, Trotsky devoted himself in 1914 to aiding *Kautsky*, *Huysmans* and [*Emile*] *Vandervelde*, in short,

19 A journal published jointly with Noi Zhordaniia [original footnote].

20 This is a homage to liquidationism [original footnote].

21 Trotsky is still apparently preaching this view, and is therefore not submitting to the resolutions of the party congresses and the congresses of the Comintern, and is appealing to the ... Congress of Veterinarians (see Trotskii, *Zapad i Vostok*) [original footnote] [Trotskii 1924f; Trotsky 1965c].

22 Trotsky tried to besmirch the CC with these arguments last year, charging it with 'the appearance inside the party' of the *Rabochaia Pravda* anti-party group [original footnote].

23 *Bor'ba*, no. 7–8, 6 July 1914, 'Borba za edinstvo i marksistskii tsentr', p. 7 [original footnote]. ['Borba za edinstvo i marksistskii tsentr', *Bor'ba*, no. 7–8, 6 July 1914. p. 7].

24 *Bor'ba*, no. 7–8, p. 5 [original footnote]. ['Borba za edinstvo i marksistskii tsentr', *Bor'ba*, no. 7–8, 6 July 1914. p. 5].

the entire synod [*sinklit*] of the Second International. The mark of liquidationism was too tainted for a war with Lenin and Leninism. Therefore, to create a new anti-Leninist bloc *against* the will of the Russian workers, Trotsky drew on the 'icons' of the Second International.

Il'ich was not at the meeting called by Huysmans in Brussels on 16–17 July 1914, for the Bolsheviks decided to fight to the end against any lousy compromise with the liquidationists.

We saw a well-known hand in the resolutions that were adopted against us at the meeting. It was stated at that meeting that 'the interests of revolutionary Marxism *in no way demand a split* in Russia at the present time, on the contrary they will be best guaranteed by unity. It is impossible to commit a worse *crime* (!!!) against the Russian proletariat than to impede and hold back the unification of its various groups into a unified whole organism'.²⁵

That was how Trotsky *acted* in 1914. And now, in 'The Lessons of October', he *tells* us his 'hypotheses' about how the revolution would have gone if it had erupted in 1914.

A surprising infatuation with phraseology – to the point of self-forgetfulness!

In 1914, Menshevism had not yet completely matured into total collapse, and Trotsky's move to us in 1917 was one of the unmistakable proofs of this.

It might be surprising to learn that in the war period – after a decade of Trotsky's adventures in the Menshevik and liquidationist camp (1904–14) – he became an advocate of Kautskyanism, that very Marxist 'centre' he himself was representing in Russia?!

Let's consider the word itself, Trotskyism – 'the *organisational ultimatism* of *Sotsial-Demokrat* is by no means the domain of the internationalist left; it also has nothing at all to do with the problems emanating from the current crisis of the socialist parties in various countries in Europe. On the contrary, it is *our old, purely native method which we applied always and for every occasion, the path of least resistance under the conditions of the amorphous worker ranks*'.²⁶

That is what it means to 'speak out of both sides of one's mouth'!²⁷ As far as advocating for the Second International is concerned, Trotskyism is as elastic as rubber; and Bolshevism is now being described as a 'purely Asiatic product', defined by proletarian backwardness and 'fuzziness'!

25 *Pis'ma Martova i Aksel'roda*, p. 293 [original footnote]. [*Pis'ma* 1924, p. 293, n. 4].

26 *Nashe slovo*, 6 June 1915 [original footnote]. ['Nashe pozitsiia. III. Raskol i edinstvo', *Nashe slovo*, no. 107, 6 June 1915, p. 1].

27 The original Russian phrase is '*imet' zub so svistom*', meaning 'to have a lisp'. In this context, it is meant to convey being opportunistic with one's statements.

This 'line of development' can be followed up to the days of the second revolution and beyond.

Not fearing an angry general's bark in response, we point out his nods to the 'Bolshevik circle spirit [*kruzhkovshchina*]' in a series of speeches in his book 1917.²⁸

If we look at last year's discussion, there too we come across those obligatory references to the 'amorphousness' of the proletariat, as a major condition facilitating the triumph of the 'apparatchiks'.

In *The New Course*, Trotsky bestowed on the proletarian party 'the education' of the youth of the higher schools on the basis that 'by its social composition and its contacts, the student youth reflects *all the social groups* of our party as well as their state of mind. Its youthfulness and its sensitivity prompt it to give an active form immediately to this state of mind. As a studying youth, it endeavors to explain and to generalize'.²⁹

At the same time in *The New Course*, Trotsky decisively removed the *proletarian* collectives from influence over party affairs. 'Inasmuch as they (factory-plant cells) constitute only one sixth of the party and their most active elements are taken away to be assigned to the party or the state apparatus, *the party cannot yet, unfortunately, lean exclusively or even principally upon the production cells*'.³⁰

With his innate gift of historical 'foresight', comrade Trotsky stated several weeks before Lenin's call that 'it is hardly possible to expect their speedy growth in the immediate future'.³¹

Trotsky's political path always zigzagged, but these zigzags revealed a certain logic: a genuine intellectual's skill at meeting events backwards [*zadom napered navstrechu sobytiiam*], an ability to become electrified [*vspykhivat'*] over revolutionary spontaneity and quickly lose that electricity [*razmagnichivat'sia*] when the revolutionary wave subsides.

Is it necessary to add that for two decades, from 1904–24, this loss of electricity in the intelligentsia was far greater than its accumulation of revolutionary passion?

28 See, for example, pp. 145–6, 1917, part I [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1924j, pp. 145–6].

29 *Novyi kurs*, p. 18 [original footnote and emphasis]. [Trotsky 1965a, p. 23].

30 *Novyi kurs*, p. 36 [original footnote and emphasis]. [Trotsky 1965a, p. 43].

31 *Novyi kurs*, p. 36 [original footnote and emphasis]. [Ibid].

II

A collaborator on the Trotskyist journal *Bor'ba* in 1914, comrade K. Radek, was the first to attempt to bestow on Trotskyism the historical achievements of Leninism ... in terms of public welfare and 'non-factional' impartiality.

Already in 1919, Trotsky introduced the new edition of his brochure *Results and Prospects of the Revolution*, with his claims for a more direct and truer path to socialism.³²

'The theory of permanent revolution' from last year is serving as a major player [*kozyrnyi tuz*] of anti-party factionalism.

But it would be a mistake to think that in the history of our revolutionary development it played a role that was in any way similar to the role of a secret 'hand of providence'.

While Trotsky inflates this theory of 'rrrevolutionary'³³ lore for subjective motives and factional designs, it is quite incomprehensible why the entire party has to follow his example in this ill-considered enterprise.

Trotsky has his habits and customs, which he did not just acquire yesterday. When his lack of political principle is exposed, he points out differences on the organisational issue. When his back is to the wall on the organisational question, he flees into the celestial realm of his theory of permanent revolution.

He was always able to mask his organisational opportunism with a slanderous reference to 'revolutionary politics', his lack of political substance he 'justified' with cries of 'the unity of the party', 'the highest interests of the revolution', 'democratism in the organisation', 'the dominance of traditional conservatism'.

Take his first Menshevik work *Our Political Tasks*. It was written with the zeal of youth, not yet distorted by 'non-factional' diplomacy.

Who of those people who have even the remotest idea of political literacy have not heard of the *Menshevik* theory of the Bolshevik 'dictatorship over the proletariat'?

The author of this was L.D. Trotsky. 'At the dawn of hazy youth', he wrote:

to prepare the working class for political rule, it is necessary to develop and practice (!) in it independent activity and the custom for continuous active supervision over the entire executive apparatus of revolution. This is the great political task that international Social Democracy has set itself. But

32 Trotsky 1965b.

33 The Russian word is 'rrrevoliutsionnyi'. It is unclear whether the extra initial letters were intentional.

*for the 'Social-Democratic Jacobins', for the passionless representatives of the system of organisational substitutionism, the enormous public political task is the preparation of the class for state rule, – the task of technical organisation is replaced by the task of devising the apparatus of power.*³⁴

Comrade reader, what does this excerpt remind you of?

It is like *The New Course*, and ... L. Martov's article about Bolshevism from the 1917–21 period.

In embryonic form, both are contained in this Menshevik manifesto.

In *The New Course*, twenty years after the appearance of his Menshevik first-born, Trotsky wrote: '*The new course does not at all signify that the party apparatus is charged with decreeing, creating, or establishing a democratic régime at such and such a date. No. This régime will be realized by the party itself. To put it briefly: the party must subordinate to itself its own apparatus without for a moment ceasing to be a centralized organization.*'³⁵

And later: '*The party [in the form of its cells and units] must return (!!!) to collective initiative, to the right of free and comradely criticism – without fear and without turning back – the right of organizational self-determination. It is necessary to regenerate and renovate the party apparatus and to make it feel that it is nothing but the executive mechanism of the collective will.*'³⁶

This is the same language, the same 'grand' gestures, as in *Our Political Tasks*, but in a weaker version, a pale image of past times!

And here is *another* publication with the same views:

The power of the organised minority of a given class (or its alliance) in the party in the name of the true interests of that class (or classes) is least of all something new that flows from the contradictions of the most recent phase of capitalism, something that distinguishes in a principled way new revolutions from the old ... We have seen a revolution carried out *by the dictatorship of the party minority* in France in 1792–94 *in the form of the dictatorship of the Jacobin party.*³⁷

34 *Nashi politicheskie zadachi*, Chapter: 'Diktatura nad proletariatom', p. 102 [Safarov footnote]. [*L.D. Trotskii* 1928, p. 201 [original emphasis]. The relevant section has not been translated in the English editions of this work (see, for example, Trotsky 1980b).

35 *Novyi kurs*, p. 78 [original footnote and emphasis]. [Trotsky 1965a, p. 90].

36 *Novyi kurs*, p. 81 [original footnote and emphasis]. [Trotsky 1965a, p. 93].

37 Martov, *Mirovoi bol'shevizm*, Berlin, pp. 39–40 [original footnote]. [Martov 1923b, pp. 39–40].

In the advanced countries, the proletariat turns to the Soviet form of the dictatorship at the moment when its movement towards social revolution is confronted with *the impossibility of realising its power in any other way than in the form of a dictatorship of the minority, meaning a minority within the proletariat itself*.³⁸

– Why does comrade Trotsky call his mistakes the product of his collaboration with the Mensheviks since 1904, merely ‘major *organisational* mistakes?’³⁹

We can see that the disagreement in 1904, which sparked the Bolsheviks’ fight against the Mensheviks, was a disagreement between two *diametrically opposed* views of revolution.

A.S. Martynov acted commendably when, having broken with Menshevism, he openly acknowledged that the Third International and its forerunners and founders, the Bolsheviks, were successful because they combined the methods of the revolutionary dictatorship of 1793 with the broad organisation of the worker masses on the model of the old German Social Democracy.⁴⁰

Trotsky has not been brave enough so far to make a similar acknowledgement.

Several months before affiliating himself with the Parvus theory of permanent revolution, Trotsky was ‘educating’ Lenin: ‘Only a Jacobin can become the leader of the revolutionary bourgeois democracy. He will gather his army – this army will not be grand and menacing! – around clanky slogans of strict “dictatorship”, iron “discipline”, “a call to insurrection”. Marxism may appear to be an ideological cover for the revolutionary intelligentsia to carry out its limited, bourgeois revolutionary (Jacobin) role’. Of course, not its class socialist content but its formal frameworks are so *eviscerated* that this ‘orthodox Marxism’ can be linked with Jacobinism in order to get ‘revolutionary Social Democracy’.⁴¹

That was how Trotsky applied his own Menshevik formula to interpret Lenin who had stated: ‘A Jacobin who wholly identifies himself with the organisation of the proletariat – a proletariat conscious of its class interests – is a revolutionary Social-Democrat’.⁴²

38 Martov, *Mirovoi bol'shevizm*, Berlin, p. 41 [original footnote]. [Martov 1923b, p. 41].

39 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 137. [Safarov's emphasis].

40 See A. Martynov, ‘Velikaia istoricheskaiia proverka’, *Krasnaia nov'*, no. 2 (12), March–April 1923 [original footnote]. [A. Martynov, ‘Velikaia istoricheskaiia proverka’, *Krasnaia nov'*, no. 2 (12), March–April 1923, p. 227].

41 *Nashi politich. zadachi*, p. 100 [original footnote and emphasis]. [L.D. Trotskii 1928, p. 197]. The relevant section is only partially translated in Trotsky 1980b, p. 127.

42 Lenin, *Shag vpered, dva shaga nazad* [original footnote]. [Lenin 1965], p. 381].

But a polemic over principles, an argument over substance, was not enough for him, and he went further. He arrogantly asked: 'Doesn't Lenin know *for whom* the central role in the system of Urals Social-Democratic Boulangisme is being prepared?'⁴³

General [Georges] Boulanger was a Black Hundred who in the 1880s tried to organise a monarchist military coup in France ...

Only by comparing all of these milestones of the political career of Trotskyism can Trotsky's statement that 'the great age of revolutionary strategy begins in 1917, first in Russia and then throughout Europe',⁴⁴ be properly evaluated.

What was the explanation for the rabid attack by Menshevism, headed by Trotsky, against Bolshevik 'Jacobinism', i.e. *against the conscious and planned preparation of the party and the working class for civil war, for a long struggle for revolutionary dictatorship?*

The fear of civil war is the reluctance to see the proletarian party as a 'fighting party' of the kind demanded by Lenin.

The contingent nature of the fellow-travellers from the bourgeois intelligentsia of the liberal bourgeoisie was revealed precisely in this refusal to take a consistent course of action for revolutionary insurrection.

This is why we must not allow ourselves to be blinded by the dust of 'the theory of permanent revolution', when before 1917 Trotskyism consistently backed away crab-like from preparations for civil war.

Do you want to know what Bolshevik 'Jacobinism' was? Do you want to find out how the 'bourgeois democratism' of the Bolsheviks manifested itself?

Let's take the best formulation of Bolsheviks from comrade Lenin in the first Russian revolution: 'A Marxist bases himself on the class struggle, and not social peace. In certain periods of acute economic and political crises the class struggle ripens into a direct civil war, i.e., into an armed struggle between two sections of the people. In such periods a Marxist is obliged to take *the stand of civil war*. Any moral condemnation of civil war would be absolutely impermissible from the standpoint of Marxism. *In a period of civil war the ideal party of the proletariat is a fighting party*'.⁴⁵

43 *Nashi politich. zadachi*, p. 106 [original footnote and emphasis]. [*L.D. Trotskii* 1928, p. 207]. The relevant section has not been translated in the English editions of this work; see, for example, Trotsky 1980b.

44 *Uroki Oktiabria*, p. xiv [original footnote]. [Trotsky, Document 1, p. 90].

45 Lenin, *Partizanskaia voina*, v. VII, part 2, pp. 82–3 [original footnote and emphasis]. [Lenin 1965m, pp. 219–20].

Trotsky's view was the direct opposite of Lenin's in the sense that while Lenin '*not only in words, but in deeds*'⁴⁶ set course for revolution, Trotsky with verbose 'revolutionariness' foisted on the proletariat *an alliance with the Kadets* – in 1904, in the new *Iskra*, in the 1906 elections to the Second Duma, in the age of reaction – in the guise of the workers' plea for the gift of freedom of coalition from the tsarist landowner-bourgeois Duma.

Trotsky is trying in vain now to confuse the Leninist party with his own 'highly principled' irreproachability. The contraband sermon on the 'anti-revolutionary features of Bolshevism' could go unpunished only until the situation changed.

Our Political Tasks revealed very accurately the *maliciously Menshevik* source behind this effort to equate the Bolsheviks with bourgeois democrats.

'*The anti-revolutionary aspects [...] of Bolshevism*', wrote Trotsky, who had 'moved leftwards' for a time under the influence of the first revolution, 'are likely to become a serious threat only (!) in the event of revolutionary victory'.⁴⁷

This opportunist's cawing over Leninist Bolshevism can be understood only in the context of actual historical events.

From 1904, the Mensheviks declared Bolshevism to be an extreme form of 'bourgeois democratism'.

Didn't Trotsky predict this in 1904 to Lenin and the Bolsheviks: 'The disillusioned will leave us (!?) – some to reformism, others to anarchism, and, if we encounter them at the crossroads of two political paths, will we remind them of this prediction'?⁴⁸

History did not see fit to present Trotsky with this pleasant possibility.

Now, however, we have a real duty to remind him of this 'prediction'.

Either socialism, and a 100 percent 'mature proletarian' one at that, or a bastard bourgeois revolution. There is no third way. There can be no third way. – This is what the *façade* of the theory of permanent revolution boils down to.

But after all, this façade is – *Menshevik*!

We call as a witness Martynov from the period 1904–5.

Martynov in the *Menshevik Nachalo* [*Beginning*] of 1905, where – by the way – Trotsky and Parvus were also preaching their 'theory', *subscribed to* their views at one time.

46 Lenin 1965n, p. 418.

47 L. Trotskii. 1905, p. 285 [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1972b, pp. 316–17].

48 N. Trotskii. *Nashi polit. zadachi*, p. 107 [original footnote]. [*L.D. Trotskii* 1928, p. 208. The relevant section has not been translated in the English editions of this work; see, for example, Trotsky 1980b].

He had enough cause for this. Indeed, he⁴⁹ even established *for Trotsky* and other Mensheviks the basic postulate that revolutionary dictatorship was possible only either at the dawn of bourgeois society, like the dictatorship of bourgeois democracy, or at the beginning of the end of the bourgeois system, like proletarian power. No *intermediate, transitional* stages, links, forms of revolutionary dictatorship were possible.

Relying on *this* view, the Mensheviks rejected the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry, and moreover also the *alliance of the workers and peasants* for the victory over the landowners, and consequently also the revolutionary victory over tsarism not in words but in deeds.

Il'ich was up in arms against this scholarly liberal distortion of Marxism in his *Two Tactics*.⁵⁰

When the wave of revolution crested by October 1905, many Mensheviks thought that 'Judgement Day' [*svetoprestavlenie*] had begun, so *surprised* were they by the course of events which the resolutions of the Third Congress of Bolsheviks had predicted in the summer of 1905.

They drifted along on the current and, after a brief moment, they believed that the revolution had begun ... the socialist revolution. In this situation, they were unable to change their Menshevik primers, unable to repudiate their bourgeois intelligentsia subordination to Struvism.⁵¹

The recently published correspondence of Martov and Axelrod contains a most interesting letter from Martov to Axelrod. It conveys wonderfully the degree of vacillation of bourgeois intelligentsia moods at that time. 'Democracy is trying to ingratiate itself; in recent days a "*mass*" backward transformation of the *osvobozhdentsy*⁵² into Marxists has begun (usually into Mensheviks). The (ideological) influence is so colossal that "*the seizure of power*" in the stormy turn of future events starts to seem almost inevitable (this does not mean that such a seizure represents something inviting; I fear that this will be a turning point in the revolution and no worse than the Jacobin dictatorship was)'.⁵³

49 See his pamphlet *Dve diktatory* [original footnote]. [Martynov 1905].

50 Lenin 1962d.

51 Struve, who ended up as a [Baron Peter] Wrangel' minion, 'accepted' Marxism in the 1890s in the sense of acknowledging the advanced role of capitalism while rejecting the class struggle [original footnote].

52 *Osvobozhdenie* [*Liberation*] was an émigré journal of zemstvo liberals and published by Struve in 1904 [original footnote].

53 The letter was written at the end of October (O.S.) 1905. *Pis'ma Martova i Aksel'roda*, p. 146 [original footnote]. [*Pis'ma* 1924, p. 146].

This shows that for a certain period of time the revolutionary phrasing and posing could seem to many representatives of intelligentsia opportunism to be a real situation of revolutionary struggle.

From this posing and phrasing about 'permanent' revolution, they wanted for almost twenty years to craft a legend. Some people find it more useful to cast the history of the struggle between Bolshevism and Menshevism in the light of legend than in the light of facts!

The 'theory' of permanent revolution took from the Mensheviks 'the repudiation of the role of the peasantry'.⁵⁴ This revealed their complete ideological dependence on bourgeois reformist tailism [*khvostizm*], which served to deliver the peasantry *into the power of the Kadet bourgeoisie*. 'Let's throw our voting-papers into the Kadet urns!' – that was the practical conclusion from the repudiation of the revolutionary organisational tasks of the proletariat in relation to the peasant masses.

On the other hand, the 'theory' of permanent revolution had a superficial effect. After all, the most effective and resonant group from the 1890s until 1905–7 had been the typically intelligentsia petty-bourgeois party of the SRs. It was from them that the notorious faction of SR Maximalists had split off in 1906 and had set itself the 'task' of directly 'introducing socialism' with the aid of the 'exes'⁵⁵ and terror.

Trotskyism, whose rhetoric sparked in 1905, gave us the gift of its intelligentsia opportunistic nature, and it was distinguished both by its ability to adapt to bourgeois politics in the age of reaction, and also by its 'skill' at adapting to the revolutionary masses in the age of the recovery [*pod'em*].

With poisonous irony, Martov (objectively) stated the Menshevik aspirations of Trotskyism: '*The power of circumstances forces Trotsky to take the Menshevik path, in spite of his contrived plan for some kind of "synthesis" between historical Menshevism and historical Bolshevism. Thanks to this and thanks to the contradiction of the inherent direction of his plan, he not only fell into the camp of the "liquidationist bloc" but was also forced to adopt a "combative" stance in it in relation to Lenin*'.⁵⁶

In the era of the *Stolypinshchina*, the theory of permanent revolution, representing itself as the assimilation of two opposed camps, did not save Trotsky at all.

54 Lenin, 'O dvukh liniakh revoliutsii', v. XIII, p. 213 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1964ff, p. 420].

55 Expropriations of private individuals [original footnote].

56 *Pis'ma*, p. 233. Pis'mo Martova – Chatskomu (Garvi), 16 May 1912 [original footnote]. [*Pis'ma* 1924, p. 233].

On the contrary, through his position in the workers' movement he *forfeited any kind of independent political existence*, and he joined a half-cowardly bloc with the liquidationists, in which political views were borrowed from the Stolypinist 'workers' party' that were in favour of destroying the underground because of a petty personal group squabble.

Oaths to a 'permanent' faith in revolution and socialism produced betrayals of both revolution and socialism at all the critical moments for a decade and a half!

'In the Bolshevik circle, the struggle for hegemony is actively offensive and insurrectionarily schismatic in nature. Among the "liquidationists", it has a more disguised, passively defensive nature, not completely recognised (!?) by them'.⁵⁷

Trotsky explained his permanent Tushino turncoats using similar 'justifications'.

We now know when Trotsky enriched our political lexicon with the term 'Leninism': he first put it into circulation in the letter to Chkhcheidze in 1913.

He cheered up this notorious Menshevik with the reminder that 'the entire edifice of Leninism at the present time is built on lies and falsification and contains the poisonous seeds of its own destruction'.⁵⁸

Not for nothing do people say: 'This behaviour tells us what kind of person this is!'

Through the war itself, Trotsky operated in the Brussels bloc, endeavouring – in the manner of Gleb Uspensky's well-known mama – to 'embrace' Lenin and the Bolsheviks 'in stages', with the gracious assistance of Vandervelde and Kautsky.

III

There is no mistaking the *pacifist-intelligentsia* lining of Trotsky's internationalism during the war.

Martov can again serve as a witness who cannot be suspected of harbouring any sympathies towards Bolshevism.

Martov's pen is responsible for the superb article in the first days of the war 'Umer Vorwärts!' [*Vorwärts* is Dead!].

57 N. Trotskii, 'Neotlozhnye voprosy', *Nasha zaria*, no. 11, 1911, p. 126 [original footnote]. [N. Trotskii, 'Neotlozhnye voprosy', *Nasha zaria*, no. 11, 1911, p. 126].

58 'L.D. Trotskii – N.S. Chkhcheidze', in *Lenin o Trotskom* 1925, p. 218; 'The Chkhcheidze Controversy', Document 14, p. 422.

The *outburst* can capture the 'idealistically' minded solitary nature of the intelligentsia, but the opportunist burden quickly drags him *down*, until the external force of events again pushes him towards the revolutionary gesture.

In an open letter on 11 March 1915 from Paris, Martov gave his friend Dan a completely accurate evaluation of Karl Kautsky's behaviour: 'He behaved like a *traitor* because he did not fight against the suggestion to vote,⁵⁹ and thereby totally demoralised the "leftists"; since then, after the gestures of the young Karl (Liebknecht) and others, now quite numerous, he behaves like an old woman, keeping totally silent on the most critical issues'.⁶⁰

In offering Dan this description of Kautsky, Martov was at that time already devoting himself completely to the political defence of this treachery.

And Trotsky acted in precisely the same way, concealing the truth from the workers and embroidering faint-hearted and cowardly Kautskyianism with 'leftist' phrases.

Together with Fr. Mehring and Rosa Luxemburg, Lenin exposed Kautsky as a 'prostitute'.⁶¹ But at this time, Trotsky portrayed Kautsky as his '*political ally*'.⁶²

The conclusions draw themselves from these comparisons.

The prior course of history determined the vacillations of Trotskyism in the *critical* period of the war.

From the very first months of the war, comrade Lenin showed the consistent connection between defencism and Menshevism on the one hand, and revolutionary proletarian internationalism and pre-war Bolshevism on the other.

In Russia, the complete *severance* of the revolutionary Social-Democratic *proletarian* elements from the *petty-bourgeois opportunist elements* has been prepared by the entire history of the working-class movement. *Those who disregard that history*,⁶³ and, by *declaiming against* 'factionalism', make themselves incapable of understanding *the real process of the formation of a proletarian party in Russia, which has developed in the course of many years of struggle against various varieties of opportunism*, are rendering that movement *the worst possible service*. Of all the 'Great' Powers

59 To vote for war credits [original footnote].

60 *Pis'ma Martov i Aksel'roda*, p. 325 [original footnote]. [*Pis'ma* 1924, p. 325].

61 Lenin, *Sobr. soch.*, v. XIII, p. 157 [original footnote]. [Compare Lenin's comment in this regard: 'Kautsky has degraded Marxism to unparalleled prostitution and has turned into a real churchman' (Lenin 1964yy, p. 231)].

62 L. Trotskii, *Voina i revoliutsiia*, vol. 1, p. 354 [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1923b, p. 346].

63 Comrade Lenin was well aware of Trotsky's dislike of history! [original footnote].

engaged in the present war, *Russia is the only one that recently experienced a revolution. The bourgeois content of that revolution, in which the proletariat nevertheless played a decisive part, could not but cause a split between the bourgeois and proletarian trends in the working-class movement.*

In the approximately twenty years (1894–1914) that Russian Social Democracy has existed as an organisation linked with the mass working-class movement⁶⁴ (and not only as an ideological trend, as in 1883–94), there was a struggle between the proletarian-revolutionary trends and the petty-bourgeois, opportunist trends. The 'Economism' of 1894–1902 was undoubtedly a trend of the latter kind. A number of its arguments and ideological features – the 'Struvist' distortion of Marxism, references to the 'masses' in order to justify opportunism, and the like – bear a striking resemblance to the present vulgarised Marxism of Kautsky, Cunow, Plekhanov, etc. It would be a very grateful task to remind the present generation of Social Democrats of the old *Rabochaya mysl'* and *Rabocheye Dyelo*,⁶⁵ as a parallel to the Kautsky of today. The 'Menshevism' of the next period (1903–08) was the direct successor, both ideological and organisational, to 'Economism'. During the Russian revolution, it pursued *tactics that objectively meant the dependence of the proletariat upon the liberal bourgeoisie*, and expressed petty-bourgeois, opportunist trends. When, in the ensuing period (1908–14), the mainstream of the Menshevik trend produced liquidationism, the class significance of that trend became so apparent that the *best representatives of Menshevism*⁶⁶ were continually protesting against the policy of *Nasha Zarya* group. It is that very group – the *only one* which, during the past five or six years, *has conducted systematic work* among the masses in opposition to the revolutionary Marxist party of the working class – that has proved to be *social-chauvinist* in the war of 1914–15! And this in a country where absolutism still exists, the bourgeois revolution is far from consummated, and 43 percent of the population oppresses a majority consisting of 'non-Russian' nations. The 'European' type of development, in which certain strata of the petty bourgeoisie, *especially the intelligentsia* and an insignificant section of the labour aristocracy can 'share in' the 'Great-Power' privileges of 'their own' nation, could not but have its Russian counterpart.

64 Trotsky and the Mensheviks rejected it [original footnote].

65 'Economist' journals [original footnote].

66 Trotsky was not one of them. On the contrary, he was against Plekhanov, and for Potresov and Dan [original footnote].

All their history has prepared the working class and the workers' Social-Democratic Party of Russia for 'internationalist' tactics, *i.e. such that are truly revolutionary and consistently revolutionary*.⁶⁷

Trotsky did not have a shadow of understanding of the revolutionary significance of this struggle which was being conducted by Bolshevism in the name of the Third International.

Poorly concealing his intelligentsia opportunistic confusion in the face of the failure of the Second International, Trotsky tried to pick up his old conciliationist verbiage.

In the editorial to *Nashe slovo*, entitled 'Our Position', he harped on a single depressingly dreary 'non-factional' note. 'Three tendencies can be clearly discerned in the realm of our urgent tasks in Russian internationalism', Trotsky wrote,

not because it contains a greater number of disagreements, but because from the very start it did not develop *within the broad framework of the parties*,⁶⁸ but rather in closed ideological laboratories of the old factions: *Sotsial-Demokrat*, the influential groups of the August bloc (including the influential internationalist elements of the Bund), and *Nashe slovo*.

The ideological traditions of the factions, which from the very beginning lent such extreme *bitterness* (!) to the disagreements in the internationalist (?) camp, have no more (!!!) important organisational aspect. *The internationalists in Russia have already taken the first steps to mechanically (!) divorce themselves from one manifestation of the old factions and intra-factional groupings*.⁶⁹

You're rubbing your eyes: it turns out that Trotsky thinks the whole liquidationist bloc fits into 'Russian internationalism'. *Axelrod, Chkheidze, the closest neighbours and collaborators of Nashe zaria* – are brought into the 'non-factional' embrace!

Don't think that this was an accidental slip of the tongue. This was an absolutely logical manifestation of the Trotskyist balancing-act: if you don't see

67 Lenin, 'Krakh II Internatsionala', *Sobr. soch.*, vol. XIII, pp. 180–1 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1964yy, pp. 258–9].

68 The Scheidemann parties of the West! [original footnote].

69 *Nashe slovo*, no. 146, 23 July 1915 [original footnote]. ['Nasha positsiia. Nasha fraktsiia i zadachi russkikh internatsionalistov', *Nashe slovo*, no. 146, 23 July 1915, p. 1].

Axelrod and the liquidationist 'Organisational Committee' as complying with internationalism, then ... only Bolsheviks are left, then ... there is no place for the *Nashe slovo* 'group', for 'non-factional' vacuity!

*'We recognise that the old factional contexts are dying out – and at the same time we deal with (!) factional organisations and intra-factional groupings as still (!) the only centres of political action.'*⁷⁰

In truth, – 'Die Denis, you will never write anything better!'⁷¹

Trotsky traced the genealogy of the *Nashe slovo* group directly from the *Bor'ba* group, that same group which 'chemically bonded' revolution with counter-revolution and was known to workers exclusively as a group of literary voyagers.

'Comrade An'. – one of the coryphées of this group (for it was *Noi Zhordaniia*) – immediately went off the deep end into social treachery.

For this reason Trotsky undertook a 'tally of his forces': '*Comrade Chkheidze*, chair of the Duma SD fraction, having at that time stated in the press his own complete solidarity with the views of comrade An. as developed in *Bor'ba*, and *comrade Skobelev*, closely affiliated with the journal *Bor'ba*, adopted the kind of position on the war from which not a single internationalist would have to dissociate himself. The foreign members of the *Bor'ba* group were in complete solidarity with the position of *Nashe slovo* ...'⁷²

The reader can see: an ocean of piffle and boasting, and when we look at the whole 'link with the masses', it all boiled down to ... links 1) with Chkheidze (and that via Zhordaniia who had fled directly into the service of tsarism), 2) with the notorious 'Minister of Labour' of the Provisional Government of 1917 Mikh. Skobelev,⁷³ and 3) with 'foreign members of the *Bor'ba* group'!

And, moreover, Trotsky's assurance to Martov that '*Nashe slovo is conducting an ideological struggle against the Leninists not as a struggle against revolutionary Marxists but against extremists*'.⁷⁴

70 *Nashe slovo*, 'Nasha pozitsiia', no. 147, 24 July 1915 [original footnote]. ['Nasha positsiia. Nasha fraktsiia i zadachi russkikh internatsionalistov', *Nashe slovo*, no. 146, 23 July 1915, p. 1].

71 These words were supposedly spoken by Grigorii Potemkin to the Russian playwright Denis Fonvizin after the premiere of his play '*Nedorosl*' [*The Minor*], a satirical play mocking the Russian country gentry, on 24 September 1782. It became a pithy saying denoting approval for a specific, isolated success.

72 Trotskii, 'Diversii' (pis'mo v redaktsiiu), *Nashe slovo*, no. 137, 11 July 1915 [original footnote]. [N. Trotskii. 'Diversii' (pis'mo v redaktsiiu), *Nashe slovo*, no. 137, 11 July 1915, p. 2].

73 A reference to Matvei Skobelev (see glossary).

74 Trotskii, 'Pod bremenem ob"ektivizma', *Nashe slovo*, no. 249, 25 November 1915 [original

That little word ‘extremists’ became a special part of the vocabulary of the most ‘timorous’ Mensheviks: as if people ‘of extreme convictions’ do not believe in Trotskyism!

The more the political development of our country reduced Trotskyism to naught, tearing the ground out from under the intelligentsia vacillations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, between imperialism and revolution, the more the rejection of the Russian revolution, of the special revolutionary features of our political development, grew in Menshevism in general and Trotskyism in particular; in short – to put this in Trotskyism’s terms – rejection of the entire ‘Russian circle ad-libbing [kruzhkovaia otsebiatina]’ in the name of ‘advanced Europe’.

Isn’t it telling that in an article that reflected Trotsky’s most ‘revolutionary’ outburst in the period before February, he could not refrain from revealing this Menshevik skepticism? In the article ‘Military Catastrophe and Political Prospects’, written during the first signs of the military collapse of tsarism, Trotsky stated directly that ‘if “national” revolution in 1905 could not be achieved, then a secondary national revolution, i.e. uniting the “nation” against the old regime, cannot even be posited by history’.⁷⁵

Even those who never attended primary school know that this was followed by the February Revolution of 1917 ...

No ranting and raving against Bolshevism was spared for *its slogan of civil war, for its slogan of defeat, for its fight against Kautskyianism in the name of the creation of the Communist International. All of this was put under the heading of ‘Leninist circle ad-libbing’.*

In the Paris *Golos [Voice]*, and later in *Nashe slovo* during the war, all the shades of Menshevism and conciliationism cohabited under one roof, with the exception only of those who *did not want* to affiliate themselves with the signpost of ‘internationalism’.

This formlessness, fuzziness, and spinelessness was the intelligentsia opportunistic rationale of the Trotskyist group in the war era. There was nothing in its soul other than ‘comrades Chkheidze and Skobelev’, other than bombastic phrases and friendly links with Menshevik circles of various kinds.

This is what made Trotskyism ‘bow low to us with our own goods’. – And so with the victory of the Bolsheviks during the struggle over the issue of participation in the military-industrial committees, *Nashe slovo*, which had no

footnote]. [N. Trotskii. ‘Pod bremenem ob’ektivizma’, *Nashe slovo*, no. 249, 25 November 1915, p. 2].

75 Trotskii, *Voina i revoliutsiia*, vol. 1, p. 256 [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1923b, p. 251].

connections of any kind in the workers' movement, sought ... to appropriate Bolshevik electoral delegates – workers!

In a weasely piece of writing, Trotsky informed his friends that 'the slogan of turning nationalism inside out'⁷⁶ was rejected (?!) – not by the "chauvinists" and "vassals of the governments", as *Sotsial-Demokrat* praised their opponents, but by the entire revolutionary internationalist vanguard of the Russian proletariat'.⁷⁷

This was a lie to save ... 'non-factional' conciliationism.

And in *Zimmerwald in 1915 and Kienthal in 1916*, at both international conferences of socialists where the social pacifist 'centre' was in the majority, L.D. Trotsky took a 'position' that was in general not far from that of P. Axelrod and Viktor Chernov. He did not join the *'Zimmerwald Left'*, that first embryonic organisation of the Comintern, but on the contrary – he conducted a *fight against 'extremism'*, a fight that in political terms was more or less *synonymous with the latest fight of the 2½ International against the Comintern*.

IV

In the little pamphlet by G. Zinoviev and N. Lenin *Sotsializm i voina*' (Geneva, 1915), where short, succinct answers are given to all the questions of creation and several others besides, we find the following administrative despatch⁷⁸ about the United States of Europe: 'Either this is a demand that cannot be implemented under capitalism ... or else it is a *reactionary* slogan, one that signifies a temporary union of the Great Powers of Europe with the aim of enhancing the oppression of colonies and of plundering the more rapidly developing countries – Japan and America' (p. 40).⁷⁹ How could this reasoning not be applied to industrial trusts which are also created 'with the aim of enhancing [...] oppression [...] and [...] plundering'. But some *Cheliabinsk populists* (!) can see *only* the reactionary features of trusts. As far as we (!!) Marxists are concerned, as we conduct class struggle against capitalists organised into trusts, we also see the trusts as a powerful tool for socialising production. We hope

76 That is how Trotsky termed the defeat of Tsarist Russia [original footnote].

77 *Nashe slovo*, no. 270, 19 December 1915 [original footnote]. ['Fakty i vyvody (eshche o Petrogradskikh vyborakh)', *Nashe slovo*, no. 270, 19 December 1915, p. 1].

78 And we still have some jokers who think that Trotsky acquired his lively style from the Bolsheviks! [original footnote].

79 Zinoviev and Lenin 1915; Lenin 1964dd, p. 344.

that the authors of that pamphlet will themselves draw from this analogy the necessary conclusion about the United States of Europe.⁸⁰

This is all delightful – the style (Lenin – a ‘Cheliabinsk populist’), the man (the pose of scholarly disdain for Cheliabinsk populists), and the arguments.

Think closely about how Trotsky’s arguments expressively reflect conciliationist, social pacifist confusion.

He proposes the slogan ‘United States of Europe’ on the basis of democracy, and demonstrates his progressive credentials by arguing that the unification of big production by capitalist trusts is also progressive.

But surely, this would mean that the working class at some time would advance this slogan: ‘*Capitalists of all countries, unite into trusts, and genuine Marxism will bless your strivings towards unification!*’

Of course not, although after the imperialist war had ended we did live to see the sermon by the Hilferdings and Kautskys *literally along these lines*; – although MacDonald, after the conclusion of the Versailles Peace, together with Albert Thomas and [Augustin] Paul-Boncour, wound up in the supreme body of ‘democratically unified’ Europe – *the League of Nations*.

Castigating the ‘Cheliabinsk populist’ Lenin, Trotsky could probably not imagine the line-by-line commentary on his reasoning that old man history would write after 1918!

But let’s suggest to comrade Trotsky that he take his views on the war era to their logical conclusion.

– ‘*The United States of Europe – Without Monarchies, standing Armies and Secret Diplomacy appear as the most important feature of the proletarian peace-programme ...*’⁸¹

By refusing to support the state – not in the name of the propagandistic circle,⁸² but in the name of the most important class – during the greatest catastrophe, internationalism is not simply passively staying out of ‘harm’s way’, but saying that *the fate of the evolution of peace is not (!)*

80 Trotsky, ‘Programma mira’. – ‘Soed. Shtaty Evropy’ – *Nashe slovo*, no. 25 [sic] (416), 4 February 1916 [original footnote]. [Trotsky, ‘Programma mira. iv. Soedinennye Shtaty Evropy’, *Nashe slovo*, no. 29 (416), 4 February 1916, p. 1].

81 *Nashe slovo*, no. 29 (416) [original footnote]. [Trotzky 1918b, p. 19]. [In May 1917, Trotsky published in pamphlet form in Petrograd a digest of the arguments he had made in 1915–16 in his articles in the émigré journal *Nashe slovo*, which Safarov so copiously cites in his piece here. The cited work is an English translation of that pamphlet].

82 But in the name of ‘comrades Chkheidze and Skobelev’? [original footnote].

*tied for us any more to the fate of the national state; rather, this latter entity became a drag on this evolution and should be overcome, i.e. replaced with a higher economic-cultural (???) organisation on a broader base. If the problem of socialism could be compared to the framework of the national state, then it should therefore be comparable (?!?) with national defence ...*⁸³

What is the real meaning of the statement by *Sotsial-Demokrat* that the political slogan of United States is reasonable, that it is economically – utopian. If it is true that the present war is in its essence a revolt by the forces of production against the tight confines of the current state, then the destruction of artificial customs barriers and the expansion of the arenas of development of the forces of production would be caused precisely by economic demands. But the fact is that *Lenin* first accepted the slogan of United States because of its republican form (*political!*), i.e. *as a revolutionary democrat*; he later tried (!!!) to approach the matter from the viewpoint of class relations (*economic!*), i.e. *as a socialist*, and he became convinced that the realisation of a United States of Europe, like, for example, the Russian Constituent Assembly, is not a problem of state form but a problem of power which can be solved only by the revolutionary proletariat. *Lenin identified the United States with socialism and rejected this slogan for the period we were experiencing.* One little trifling detail disappeared (!?) from this construction: social revolution. *Moreover, the European Republican Federation is a state instrument of social (???) revolution (!?!?) and without this it becomes a democratic abstraction.*

It is especially typical of *Lenin*, in whom revolutionary democratism and socialist doctrinairism reside side-by-side and never (!?) merge into a living Marxist whole,⁸⁴ it is especially typical, we say, that, having accepted the United States in the political sense and rejected it in the economic sense, *Lenin contrived throughout to carry out the principle of national self-determination. In this, victory remained on the side of revolutionary democracy.* The socialist doctrinaire did not manage to poison it with doubts about the feasibility of self-determination on capitalist principles

...⁸⁵

83 L. Trotskii. 'Programma mira'. – 'Pozitsiia 'Sotsial-Demokrata'. – *Nasha slovo*, no. 86 (473), 11 April 1916 [original footnote]. [L. Trotskii, 'Programma mira. v. Pozitsiia Sotsial-Demokrata', *Nasha slovo*, no. 86 (473), 11 April 1916, pp. 1–2].

84 See *Nashi politicheskie zadachi*. 'The Lessons of October' provides only a worse, weaker version of this primary source of Russian Menshevism [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1928].

85 Trotskii, *Nashe slovo*, no. 87 (474). – 'Programma mira – Pozitsiia Sotsial-Demokrata',

*The state prerequisite of self-determination of large and small nations of Europe is the state unification of all Europe. Only the aegis of a democratically unified Europe, freed from state customs barriers, makes possible national cultural existence and development, free (!!!) from national economic antagonisms and on the basis of genuine self-determination.*⁸⁶

This is such a dirty trick. In the introduction to his two-volume *War and Revolution*, Trotsky assured the party that *Nashe slovo* had taken the position that the task of our party should be to win power in the name of the socialist overthrow. *Sotsial-Demokrat* persisted with the position of a 'democratic' dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. The March revolution put an end to these differences.⁸⁷

And now it turns out that he – merely – stood for 'a democratically unified Europe', which in some inscrutable way and at an unknown date, after resolving all the contradictions of national limitations, suddenly and surprisingly becomes the 'state instrument of social revolution'?

Comrades, don't you find that comrade Trotsky's 'forgetting' of the facts of the past can compete only with the naïve ignorance of his complaisant secretaries?!

We believe unequivocally that the naïve ignorance of young secretaries who discover for the first time the existence of America in ... the 'American' articles of comrade Trotsky, is far more excusable than similarly forgetting subjectively uncomfortable facts.

But let's take a look at the whole outlandish course of the arguments in their essence and in more detail.

The first thing that catches the eye is the rejection of 'national' revolution *under the guise of* bringing the international socialist revolution closer.

This pretext though is used only as a slippery rejection of the right of oppressed peoples to declare their independence. *No matter what the subjective "good" intentions of Trotsky and Martov may be, their evasiveness objectively supports Russian social-imperialism.* The epoch of imperialism has turned all the "great" powers into the oppressors of a number of nations, and the develop-

12 April 1916 [original footnote]. [L. Trotskii, 'Programma mira. v. Pozitsiia *Sotsial-Demokrata*', *Nashe slovo*, no. 87 (474), 12 April 1916, p. 1].

86 Trotskii, *Nashe slovo*, no. 28 (415), 3 February 1916. – 'Programma mira – Pravo natsii na samoopredelenie' [original footnote]. [L. Trotskii, 'Programma mira. III. Pravo natsii na samoopredelenie', *Nashe slovo*, no. 28 (415), 3 February 1916, p. 2].

87 L. Trotskii, *Voina i revoliutsiia*, vol. 1, *Vvedenie*, p. 26. The introduction notes: '18 March 1919 Moscow-Simbirsk. 24 April 1922, Moscow' [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1923b, p. 27].

ment of imperialism will inevitably lead to a more definite division of trends in this question in international Social-Democracy as well'.⁸⁸

But in rejecting the right of nations to self-determination 'in the name of' international social revolution, Trotsky was arguing that '*democratically unified Europe*' can resolve all 'national economic antagonisms'. This is clearly *substituting the struggle for the revolutionary overthrow of the dictatorship of imperialism with the hope for the possibility of eliminating the imperialist challenge through European democratic reform*.

Rejecting 'national' revolution in Russia in this way on the basis of 'the theory of permanent revolution' dragged Trotsky into the *Kautskyian swamp*.

How did it come to pass that these tasks of *bourgeois-democratic* unification of *Europe* were put *ahead of* the tasks of the revolutionary struggle against the war, against imperialism, against the oppression of individual nations?

This came out of the Kautskyist pacifist 'notion' of the transformation of imperialism into 'ultra-imperialism', of the accommodation of the national interests of capital with international finance capital.

The 'League of Nations', Hilferdingist 'Marxism' as the herald of the American stock-exchange, this MacDonaldist pacifism – this was what the slogan 'United States of Europe' on a pacifist-democratic platform meant in a historical sense.

'The proletariat fights for the revolutionary overthrow of the imperialist bourgeoisie; *the petty bourgeoisie fights for the reformist "improvement" of imperialism*, for adaptation to it, while submitting to it'.⁸⁹

Trotskyism's dependence during the war on petty-bourgeois vacillations was clearly revealed by its poor understanding of the revolutionary uniqueness of the international situation.

Then, like the 'Cheliabinsk populists', starting from the maturity of the *socialist* proletarian revolution on an *international* scale, they draw the conclusion about the need to make full and every possible use of the 'national' revolution developing in Russia against the landowners and tsarism in order to *make preparations for the future transition to socialist revolution, from February to October* – Trotsky with his resounding phrase about 'permanent' revolution 'buried' the 'national' revolution *in order to declare a postponement of the international socialist revolution until the democratic unification of Europe*.

88 Lenin, Vol. XIII. 'Itogi diskussii o samoopredelenii' (Napisano v oktiabre 1916), p. 434 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1964ii, p. 360].

89 Lenin, 'Proletarskaia revoliutsiia i renegat K. Kautskii', vol. xv, p. 493 [original footnote and emphasis]. [Lenin 1965f, p. 283].

Like all of the Mensheviks, Trotsky saw not only *an unbridgeable gulf* between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist revolution, but also considered *imperative* the strict '*sequence*' of the transition from one to the other – at least *in a general European context*.

Otherwise, why would it be necessary to look forward to the European 'League of Nations'?

Having eliminated the 'national economic antagonisms', 'democratically unified' bourgeois Europe would have slowly proceeded along the Menshevik path.

Looking back, we can only thank history that it ensured victory by such 'revolutionary democrats' and 'Cheliabinsk populists' as Lenin. There is much to be said for the fact that if things had not gone so well for the 'Cheliabinsk populists', comrade Trotsky *on his own* would scarcely have managed to leave the company of the Chkheidzes, Kautskys and Hilferdings.

The struggle against the slogan of civil war and for the slogan of peace; the decisive rejection of defeatism while completely ignoring the fact that it was the only correct application – in the conditions of the imperialist war – of the course for civil war; the 'permanent' rhetoric and the slogan of 'democratic Europe'; the fight against Bolshevism and the Zimmerwald Left while extolling unification with Kautskyian social patriotism – such was the sum total of Trotskyist views during the war.

Only by comparing the slogan 'democratic Europe' – the embellished slogan of the democratic 'League of Nations' – with Trotsky's recent new blunder about the duration of the 'democratic pacifist era', can we correctly evaluate the nature of the current recurrence of comrade Trotsky's Menshevik afflictions.

Trotskyism always had too much affection for rhetoric. But there was always a dearth of real links with the proletarian movement, of actual revolutionary intent, or genuine revolutionary practice.

Having received the baton of the theory of permanent revolution from Parvus's hands, 'Trotsky proved unable to come up with some marginally sensible views on the *agrarian* question'.

– A small detail, but what a telling one!

Having taken the fight for freedom of coalition from the liquidationists, Trotsky contrived to avoid the whole period of counter-revolution from 1908–12 and the revolutionary upsurge of 1912–14 *without answering* the question of the revolutionary fate of our country, of the fate of the *second* revolution.

Having taken his views on the war and imperialism from Kautskyianism, he was not able to 'critically master' them but became trapped *between revolutionary rhetoric and Kautskyian tailism*.

Trotskyism in 1923–4 was attempting an insurrection of the dead.

There are no miracles in nature or in society.

So, let the whole party see the real history of Trotskyism, and even more – its personal autobiography!

Do *not* let the dead weigh on the brain of the living.⁹⁰ Don’t let Trotskyism block the path of Leninism.

⁹⁰ The original phrase *‘Pust’ mertvov ne khvataet za gorlo zhivov’* is probably echoing Marx’s phrase: ‘The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living’ (Marx and Engels 1979, p. 103).

‘The Theory of Permanent Revolution. An Article by Comrade N.I. Bukharin’¹

N. Bukharin

The question of permanent revolution is a question about the general evaluation of the course of our revolution, a question about the relations between the basic classes of our society, about changes in the relations of the social forces in the course of revolution, and, consequently, about the conclusions we must draw from the corresponding theoretical analysis.

The present stage of our discussion, the form it is taking at the present time, and the scope of the questions which are now developing inside our party organisation, are different from the past formulation of the question: the basic difference in our present discussion consists of the individual problems which confronted us last year, and which in part still confront us today, all these individual problems come together in one basic question, the question about the understanding of our revolution in toto. And this goes to the practical essence of the theoretical disputes about permanent revolution.

The moment our country is experiencing now is a special moment. We are now at a turning point in history. This is not like those historical turning points which our revolution has already gone through. But this does not stop it being a definite historical turning point. The essence of any internal turning point in our country – but internal turning points are of course linked with the external situation – derives from *changes in the relations between the basic classes of our society*, the working class and the peasantry. This was so and will be so for

1 This article is an edited stenogram of a report delivered on 13 December to a meeting of propagandists of the Moscow organisation [Bukharin's footnote]. [N. Bukharin, ‘Teoriia permanentnoi revoliutsii’, *Pravda*, no. 295, 28 December 1924, pp. 5–7. This was a report by Bukharin on 13 December 1924 to a meeting of the propagandists of the Moscow Party organisation. A little less than half of it (the two sections entitled ‘The General Estimation of our Revolution’ and ‘The General Estimate of Classes in the Progress of Our Revolution’) appeared in translation in *Communist Review*, vol. 5, no. 10, February 1925, and is available on www.marxists.org. I have adapted this translation to conform to the conventions I have used in the other pieces in this collection. I have provided a new translation of those parts of the *Pravda* original that were not originally translated].

a very long time to come. The turning point that is taking place here now is also rooted in changes in the relationship between the working class and the peasantry. We only brought this point up to show the following: if our country is at a famous turning point, and if this turning point demands that our party respond to the question of the new relationship between the working class and the peasantry, then it is completely natural that the 'theory of the permanent revolution', which 'touches' primarily on *this* question, must be linked with the practical tasks of the present day; and in this sense, the formulation in turn of the theoretical discussion of permanent revolution reflects the practical, day-to-day demand to look again and again at the fundamental relationship between the classes of our society, starting from the Leninist understanding of this relationship between the classes in a new, unique context, when these relations developed *in a different* way than they had developed earlier. This discussion reflects and expresses the need for the correct answer to be found, starting from the general principles of comrade Lenin's teachings about the worker-peasant bloc to new questions of our 'great politics'. This is why we have said and are still saying that our theoretical discussion has an immediate, current, practical significance. Let's move now, after this shortish introduction, to the essence of our disagreements with comrade Trotsky.

The disagreements between comrade Trotsky and a majority of the party were significant not only in the pre-October period, but – as everyone is aware – also in the post-October period. And now all of these disagreements have been analysed in general, theoretical terms. The recent literary works by comrade Trotsky,² and also the letter which was printed with comrade Ol'minskii's comment,³ (we note in parentheses that we are completely ignoring any personal evaluations, any personal sympathies and antipathies, allegiances or dislikes, and are speaking only about the *political line*) have essentially shone a bright light on the individual and personal quarrels, disagreements, and clashes between a majority of our party and comrade Trotsky. Everyone could see from comrade Trotsky's letter that, on the question of the *basic motive forces of the Russian Revolution* and – in the context of this general question – of the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry, there is a big difference between comrade Trotsky's position and the position of our party as a whole. And this fact is common to all of the individual, personal errors of comrade Trotsky; it binds them in a kind of common knot, and this knot is bound up in turn in the theory of permanent revolution. We will try to illustrate this in the following presentation.

2 A reference probably to Trotsky, Document 1; Trotsky 1965a; Trotsky 1971.

3 Chkheidze Controversy, Document 14, pp. 423–6.

The Formal Logic of Trotskyism and the Leninist Dialectic

If we look at the whole series of mistakes made by comrade Trotsky (and many of us made them with him), if we in good faith want to see what all these mistakes have in common, then this common factor can be defined as a *formally rationalistic*, literary approach to our public life; not the *vitally dialectic* approach which distinguishes Bolshevism, but the *formally logical* approach which distinguishes and has always distinguished the specific position of comrade Trotsky over the entire course of our revolution.

Comrade Lenin never refused to 'dig out to the very roots' any political mistake when this was necessary – if the moment demanded – in order to expose a mistake and eliminate it. Not for nothing did he, in the argument about the trade unions and their tasks, devote a series of columns to the *dialectic*, by offering a number of brilliant and amazingly keen evaluations. Not for nothing did he insist in the final days of his life on the need to 'study the dialectic'. Now, when the disagreements with comrade Trotsky are lining up one behind the other; when we can easily see that the errors of comrade Trotsky (and the past errors of many of us) have special, specific traits, are of a special type – then these errors must be exposed right down to their *methodological roots*. Then the difference between Leninism and Trotskyism will become clear once and for all.

What is the strength of the Leninist dialectic and of the policies which the party pursues on the basis of the Leninist dialectic? What is the strength of Leninist teachings, what is the basis of the ingenious mastery with which Lenin, throughout our revolution, made sense of its stormy events, of its ebbs and flows? It could be said that Lenin, along with his brilliant ability to foresee great historical prospects, had three qualities which express his masterful grasp of Marxist dialectics: first, the greatest ability first and foremost to find the *unique* in every individual situation, to see the *original, the individual, the unrepeatable* in every historical period, in every historical moment; second, the ability to see the *transitions from one situation to the next*, to see how one historical period moves into a second historical period, how one situation, one conjuncture becomes another; third – and this flows from the first two qualities – *the greatest ability to single out from each historical period* (at the 'current moment', as we say in our political jargon) the fundamental link, *which must be 'seized'*.

By and large, comrade Lenin should be measured by completely different standards than the usual ones – and even the quite unusual ones – for revolutionaries. Usually, when we speak of some kind of tendency in socialism or 'socialism' in quotation marks, we use quite general formulas: here is the 'Social-Democratic', 'opportunistic' point of view, and whoever has a 'revolutionary'

point of view we usually call a 'good revolutionary'. That is the usual representation. But this scale, this criterion, this kind of evaluation and this kind of approach to Leninist teaching is completely inapplicable, because it is strange how comrade Lenin, as the embodiment of all of the teachings that are primarily developing Marxism, approaches such criteria. To Leninism, the general revolutionary formulation of the question is something that is understood in itself. Of course, this is not the important thing. It is absurd to argue about it, and it is stupid to approach this teaching with this viewpoint, a teaching formulated by comrade Lenin: *insofar as this is understood in itself*, it is axiomatic from the point of view of those formulations of the question, which comrade Lenin has taught us. But this, we repeat, is characteristic: and it is characteristic that comrade Lenin from the standpoint not only of the *general* prospects but also *within the limits* of these general prospects, always detected this *original transition* from one conjuncture to the next, and with unusual constancy, with exceptional skill he was always able to find the link to pull the carriage of our revolution onto the correct path. It is from *this* standpoint, by this yardstick, that we must measure comrade Lenin, and we must use *this* yardstick to measure the policy of our party, because the policy of our party is the *policy of the Leninist party*, which was nurtured by Vladimir Il'ich, who built it, who developed it, and who led it for many years through the entire heroic period in the history of our workers' movement. However, if we approach comrade Trotsky's errors from the standpoint of *these* criteria, or if we approach the particular and the specific in comrade Trotsky, then we will see how Trotskyism instantly misfires. He does not measure up to the standards by which the policies of the Bolshevik Party can and must be measured. Many of us were very much attracted – and some still are today – by the brilliant ability of a great master like comrade Trotsky to set forth some kind of great perspective. But this all stacks up to a very low level, here the gain is only in comparison with Social Democracy which became mired in the sins of opportunism and which does not care for revolution, for it, Social Democracy, is counter-revolutionary. From such a great master as comrade Trotsky, brilliant, general, revolutionary perspectives are impressive. If we measure by *this* yardstick, then, of course, all the plusses will be on comrade Trotsky's side. But these are 'nuts and bolts [*azy*]' from the viewpoint of *Leninism*. And thus, if comrade Trotsky's positions are measured by the *Leninist* yardstick, i.e. if we ask the question: all well and good, but how should we act at any given moment? How should each concrete period in the course of the development of this brilliant perspective be analysed? What must be done in practice so that this perspective is realised not on paper but in reality, and what complicated theoretical analysis must be carried out here? – if we come from the viewpoint of these criteria, it now becomes clear that Trotskyism makes

inescapable errors, it turns out to be bankrupt. Trotskyism does not measure up to this formulation of the question. And this is more clearly evident now than it has ever been before. It does not measure up to the kind of yardstick we use for current Bolshevik politics. We said that the fundamental feature of the Leninist method, the true expression of the Leninist-Marxist dialectic, is the ability to see the *unique* situation, the ability to see the transition from one *situation* to a different one and find the *basic link*, behind which the whole chain must be dragged. And thus, we would not have dealt with any great, or relatively small, problem, if we kept talking about comrade Trotsky's errors, we cannot find in comrade Trotsky precisely that skill, i.e. that fundamental thing which distinguishes Leninism as the future development of Marxist teaching. And so he makes these kinds of mistakes in practice. Let us take a number of examples from different areas and from different periods in the development of our revolution. Let us take, firstly, the example of '*the plan*', an example from our discussion last year. In essence, comrade Trotsky was pushing this in order to get out of the crisis we were in, by constructing a more ideal and more rational economic plan. From this came a whole series of practical suggestions, which were intended – or, rather, should have been intended – to develop our industry. Instead of this, in reality the push we received came not from the fulfilment of comrade Trotsky's plan, but *from a completely different direction*, from *currency reform* and a policy of lowering prices. This is now an established fact. Currency reform and a policy of lowering prices were two moments which *in reality* moved our economic life out of its half-dead state. And the economic successes we have had in the past year in our economic life can be explained, mainly, by these two fundamental factors. Consequently, it is absolutely clear that the little path to a cure for economic matters, which comrade Trotsky proposed, concealed many errors. What kinds of errors? Let us try to take a good faith look at this. Above all, the opposition did not see the *uniqueness* of the situation we were in, it did not see the *uniqueness* of the economic situation, connected with the general situation and the general structure of the country; the opposition platform put forth in essence abstract designs, abstract slogans, which boiled down to a very simple thing, namely that any plan is better than any anarchy, and that a planned, tidy economy is better than an anarchic one. This sounds terribly revolutionary. And from the standpoint of the criteria we were speaking about, this platform was quite brilliant. Of course, who can argue against a plan? Some kind of pathetic huckster [*torgash*]. On this basis, it is possible to 'outline' the unusually sharply formulated pseudo-'proletarian' line: 'Aha, you are against the plan? But the plan is the hallmark of socialism. Does this mean you are against socialism? Does this mean we must quit socialism? Does this mean we must give in to the anti-socialist muzhik?' etc., etc.

Supposedly, those who are protesting against the 'plan' are expressing a 'petty-bourgeois deviation', and here comrade Trotsky's 'planning principle' is the embodiment and manifestation of the 'proletarian-socialist mind' in its revolutionary struggle against counter-revolutionary, petty-bourgeois elements.

But this is a crudely 'superficial view'. And if we delve more deeply, we get a quite different picture. For the question was not at all about what was better 'in general': the 'plan' or 'anarchy', socialism or a commodity economy; and it was not at all about whether we were marching towards a plan, towards socialism, etc.; the question was *how*, given the colossal number of petty proprietors, the huge significance of the market, the collapse of the currency and the crisis of sales, to take the next baby step towards the plan we are intending. *This* was the practical question: and it was here that comrade Trotsky was unable to grasp the particularities of our situation; despite the fact that he, in every possible way in his works in the 'post-discussion period', always strove to brush aside the political accusation against him – his insufficient attention to the peasant question – he also suffered from this defect at 'this time': an underestimation of the peasant economy was reflected here in an underestimation of the force of the *market*, in a failure to understand the entire significance of the nerve-centre of the market economy, i.e. the *monetary system*, in a lopsided analysis of industry, taken in *isolation*. The *uniqueness* of the moment, its fundamental peculiarity resided not in the sicknesses of production per se, or rather, not so much there, as in the failure of the alliance [*smychka*] with the village: for given the policy of high prices (and the crisis of sales), as well as the failure of the currency (*sovznak*) (the loss of any kind of purchasing power), it was *impossible* to drag industry forward, however much we pushed such a wonderful 'plan'. Consequently, comrade Trotsky did not look where it was necessary to look. He did not see the *uniqueness* of the moment. Secondly, he did not grasp the *transition* from one stage to the next. It is our task, given the scattered nature of the agrarian economy when we have a colossal number of small economies, to move gradually and very slowly from the unplanned economy to the plan. But for one phase to move to the next, a *whole series* of steps must be taken; it is impossible to put things into practice without these, and it is necessary to grope for them, so that it is possible to climb from one step to the next. What kind of step had to be taken in order to move even a little towards the plan in practice? This was the question of the Leninist 'link' that had to be 'grasped' at that moment. This 'link' was *currency reform*. In other words, in order in reality, *in fact*, to take one more step towards a planned economy, a ladder was needed, which could be called 'a ladder to currency reform', and we had to put our feet on the 'ladder of currency reform'. *Only* then *in fact* could we take another step

towards an economic plan. But just as *comrade Trotsky did not see this link*, the entire opposition along with him overlooked it. Everybody knows that after our party discussion, some comrades from the opposition regarded our currency reform with much scepticism, predicted its inevitable failure, imploring us to have mercy on its inevitable failure. The exact opposite happened in reality. Evident here, then, was the inability to find the necessary link here. This was a scheme in place of an analysis. The abstract in place of the concrete. Formal logic in place of the dialectic. Trotskyism in place of Leninism.

Let's take another question, the question where, together with comrade Trotsky and 'I, in my humbleness' [*meine Wenigkeit*], the greatest mistake was made: we are speaking about the Brest peace. We are permitting ourselves this example once again because here again, with extraordinary clarity and under quite different conditions, the *same* type of mistake was made. What was the *uniqueness* of that (i.e. the 'Brest') moment? What was it about first and foremost? It was about the fact that *the muzhik did not want to fight*. This was the 'crux' of it, and this had to be understood as quickly as possible, and this had to be the starting point. What did we 'left communists' at that time, and Trotsky along with us, propose? We also came up with a 'plan' which looked very good: revolutionary war. It is true that comrade Trotsky put forward an interim slogan: 'neither peace, nor war'. But he also said at the same time that it is better to perish under the sword of German imperialism than under the blows of the bag-men [*meshochniki*]. The immediate fight, the heroic battle – this was his most immediate perspective. These 'plans' looked very good, they were regarded as purely revolutionary, and anyone who did not share this goal was in our eyes a capitulationist. The 'left communists' took this ideology to its logical conclusion; their circles, and the circles of comrade Trotsky's sympathisers, felt that if the party could proceed from the fact that the muzhik was deserting the front, then we were turning into a *petty-bourgeois*, peasant party. This was propagated in particular by comrade Riazanov, who then left the party, because we had, as it were, lost our proletarian innocence.⁴ It is clear from this that

4 Let us look at a few parts of comrade Riazanov's speech because this speech articulates the issue most sharply in terms of class quasi-analysis:

'I knew', says comrade Riazanov, 'that the proletarian party to which we belong ... must face a dilemma at the moment it seizes power, will have to solve the question whether to rely on the peasant masses *or* (our emphasis. N.B.) on the proletariat of Western Europe ... *Comrade Lenin, and that part of the party which followed him, preferred* – we analysed the conditions sometime later – *to rely on the peasants*. In our faction, I have already determined the policy of comrade Lenin. Lenin wanted to make use of Tolstoy's slogans, modifying

comrade Trotsky had not learned the first commandment of correct analysis, had not learned the *uniqueness of the moment*, that his analysis had not been given in the way it should have been given to politicians, who want to lead the party to victory not with words but with deeds. And at bottom of all of this was first and foremost the most brilliant mastery of incomparable Leninist analysis. The second question was the question whether *the transition from one phase to the next*, from one situation to the next, *could be recognised or not*. What comprised the actual transition from one phase to the next in the Brest days? We must understand how it is possible to go from *the period of muzhik DESERTION* to the period of *revolutionary defence against the enemy*. It was precisely this too that neither the Left Communists nor Trotsky were able to grasp at all. And of course the third question: what was the 'link' it was necessary to grasp onto, *so as to facilitate this transition to a different step*, i.e. the transition from the phase of desertion, to the 'plan', i.e. to defence? What was this link? This link was the *conclusion of the peace*. This link had to be 'seized' in order to dissolve the rotting old army; in order to start to build detachments capable of defence, on new principles, on the basis of the defence of the land from the landowner; in order that, having relinquished territory and won some time, conditions for a successful struggle could be created. This link too was not seen by comrade Trotsky. This means that the question about the 'link' is completely clear here. *Now* it is more evident than ever before. It means that we have the same type of mistake as in the example with the 'plan'. It is

them for our own age. Tolstoy proposed building Russia *around muzhiks, around fools*; Lenin proposed it *around muzhiks, around soldiers*. We are now reaping the benefits of this muzhik and soldier policy' (*VII s'ezd RKP, stenogr. otchet*. Gosizdat, p. 87). [*Sed'moi Ekstrennyi S'ezd* 1962, p. 73].

Comrade Trotsky was very uninterested in accounts of the mood of the peasantry. He staked *everything* on the immediate action of the West European proletariat. 'The wing to which I belong', he said, 'believes that our only possibility now is ... to revolutionise the German proletariat. Thanks to this, there has been no development of continuity in the propaganda we used to conduct, there is no historical breakthrough in it. Now we must confront the European proletariat, and the German proletariat first and foremost, with the political drama which was not created by us, but which flows from the essence of the international situation, and we must blame the German party entirely for its failure to support us' (*Protokoly*, p. 81). [*Sed'moi Ekstrennyi S'ezd* 1962, p. 68]. (Do not sign the peace, as then our entire agitation would be compromised as a 'farce') (p. 80) [*ibid.*, p. 67]. As the text shows, the Left Communists, 'pure-blooded', also adopted the point of view that peace would be accompanied by the peasant degeneration of our party and of Soviet power [original footnote].

a good revolutionary prospect 'in general', 'theory' is written or spoken with brilliant words, but is dead in practice. If you are to seriously follow this theory, you will achieve the opposite of what you are writing on the paper.

This is the general type of mistake which is typical of comrade Trotsky. And keeping an eye on this type of mistake will help us understand a great deal about today's conditions.

In conclusion we note here that Leninism destroys all the traditional, fetishised, verbal disguises [*slovesnye obolochki*]. It by *no* means always conducted a 'leftist' policy. It conducted a *correct* policy, i.e. a policy that met the general needs of the proletariat and grasped the uniqueness of the moment. And for this reason it is an unrivalled weapon in the international class struggle.

The General Estimation of our Revolution

We come now to the general estimation of our revolution. Comrade Trotsky's theory is called the 'Theory of Permanent Revolution'. We have before us, above all, the question of the general estimation of our revolution. Comrade Trotsky, in one of his last, or 'last but one', productions, in his pamphlet *The New Course*, in this connection wrote the following:

As to the theory of the permanent revolution, *I see no reason to renounce what I wrote on this subject in 1904, 1905, 1906, and later*. To this day, I persist in considering that *the thoughts I developed at that time are much closer, taken as a whole, to the genuine essence of Leninism* than much of what a number of Bolshevik wrote in those days. The expression *permanent revolution* (author's emphasis. N.B.) is an expression of Marx ... The permanent revolution, in an exact translation, is the continuous revolution, the uninterrupted revolution. What is the political idea embraced in this expression? It is, for us communists, that the revolution does not come to an end after this or that political conquest, after obtaining this or that social reform, but that it continues to develop further and its only boundary is the socialist society ... For Russia, this theory signified: what we need is not the bourgeois republic as a political crowning, nor even the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry, but a workers' government supporting itself upon the peasantry and opening up the era of the international socialist revolution. Thus, the idea of the permanent revolution coincides entirely with the fundamental strategical line of Bolshevism ... One cannot discover in my writings of that time the slightest attempt to leap over the peasantry. The theory of the perman-

ent revolution led directly to Leninism and in particular to the April, 1917, Theses.

Novyi kurs, pubd by Kr. Nov', 1924, pp. 50 ff.⁵

In the preface to his book 1905, Comrade Trotsky wrote:

'It was precisely in the interval between January 9 and the April [sic] strike of 1905 that those views on the nature of revolutionary development in Russia which came to be called the theory of "permanent revolution" were formed in the author's mind ... Despite an interruption of twelve years, *this analysis has been entirely confirmed*' (1905, 2nd ed. Gosizdat, 1922, preface, pp. 4–5).⁶

Finally, in his letter to Comrade Ol'minskii, Comrade Trotsky said:

I in no way believe that I was wrong about everything in my disagreements with the Bolsheviks ... I consider my evaluation of the motive forces of the revolution to have been indisputably correct ...

And now I could easily divide my polemical articles against the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks into two categories: *some were devoted to an analysis of the internal forces of the revolution, its perspectives ...* and others were devoted to an evaluation of the factions of the Russian Social Democrats, their struggle and so forth. I could republish the articles in the former category without any corrections, *as they completely and utterly mesh with the position of our party from 1917 onwards.*⁷

Thus, Comrade Trotsky *now* asserts that:

- 1) The theory of permanent revolution has proved to be correct, for it has been confirmed by experience 'wholly and completely';
- 2) The theory of permanent revolution is infinitely nearer to the essence of Leninism than all the rest;
- 3) The theory of permanent revolution is in complete harmony with the strategic policy of our party and of Bolshevism since 1917.
- 4) The theory of permanent revolution under no circumstances is based upon an underestimation of the peasantry, and in general,

5 Trotsky 1965a, pp. 59–61.

6 Trotsky 1972b, pp. vi, vii. Bukharin has inserted into the original quotation the phrase: 'on the nature of revolutionary development in Russia'. He also wrongly quotes 'April strike', where the original reads 'October strike' (p. vi). The original Russian edition also reads 'October strike' (Trotskii 1922, p. 4).

7 Chkheidze Controversy, Document 14, pp. 424–5.

5) The theory of permanent revolution presents an absolutely correct estimation of the motive forces of our revolution.

In paying so many compliments to his theoretical offspring, comrade Trotsky to a high degree reveals his *internal party line*.

Why is the whole history of our party right up to 1917, in the eyes of comrade Trotsky, equal to zero? Because, in his opinion, it was only in 1917 that the party adopted the point of view of permanent revolution.

Why indeed was our party 'born' in 1917? Because only at that time was it re-baptised with the sign of the permanent revolution.

Why is it unimportant to deal with the pre-revolutionary fight against Menshevism and Trotskyism? Because the theory of permanent revolution acts as a screen to conceal the past, present and future errors of comrade Trotsky.

And so on, and so forth.

To sum up: the essence of Leninism, of that born as Leninism in 1917 (see also comrade Preobrazhenskii's article 'Allies in Spirit'),⁸ is *the theory of permanent revolution*. It is not surprising, therefore, that comrade Trotsky comes forth as the chief Leninist and guardian of its covenants (out of modesty he does not claim to be their authority). What is important for comrade Trotsky is not historical Bolshevism, but Trotskyism with the label Leninism.

But we will leave this question now, for it has been sufficiently dealt with already in our press. We will take up the analysis of comrade Trotsky's theory as such.

Comrade Trotsky presents the question in the following manner.

The theory of permanent revolution is a theory, the principles of which were laid down by Karl Marx. 'Permanent revolution', that is, 'unceasing revolution' is a revolution which in the last analysis has its limits in the achievement of socialist society. On the strength of this, comrade Trotsky, in a number of his recent works, says: Very well, that is precisely what has happened – permanent revolution has justified itself *because the proletariat in Russia has captured political power*. After all, up till 1917, the Bolsheviks argued against the theory of permanent revolution, for they constantly insisted that the revolution in Russia had to be a bourgeois revolution. Indeed, in 1905 and up till the February revolution, we did say so. But who proved to be correct? The advocates of the theory of permanent revolution, or the orthodox Bolsheviks? *The advocates of the theory of permanent revolution proved to be correct*, and the Bolsheviks became 'good' only in 1917 precisely because they abandoned the Bolshevik theory of the revolution, and accepted its Trotskyist interpretation – these are

8 I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

the conclusions that Comrade Trotsky draws. Let us examine them. First of all, it should be observed that the quintessence of the theory of permanent revolution is by no means the fact that we are confronted by a revolution *which in the final analysis will reach a stage when the workers will have captured political power*. In *this* sense, permanent revolution did come about, for the working class really came into power.⁹ But here we have *another* question and it represents the '*quintessence*' of the theory of permanent revolution. And it is of this quintessence that we must primarily speak. But before doing so, it is necessary to state how Marx understood the theory of permanent revolution. In his pamphlet, Comrade Stalin quotes a decisive passage from Marx, and makes quite a correct commentary upon it. Marx wrote: 'While the democratic petty-bourgeois wish to bring the revolution to a conclusion as quickly as possible, and with the achievement, at most, of the above demands, it is our interest and our task to make the revolution *permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance, until the proletariat has conquered state power*'.¹⁰ What then did Marx understand by the theory of uninterrupted revolution? By uninterrupted revolution Marx conceived the prospect of the revolution taking a course in which the relation of forces continuously changes, and the revolution all the time develops 'on an ascending axis'. The landlords, let us say, are overthrown. Their place is taken by one of the sections of the bourgeoisie, the liberal bourgeoisie, for example. With this the revolution does not end. The liberal bourgeoisie is overthrown and its place is taken by the radical petty bourgeoisie. The radical petty bourgeoisie is

9 One must bear in mind here the relative character of the conception 'unceasing', for unceasing in the sense of a continuous and uninterrupted zone of revolution did not occur. After the defeat of 1905–7, there was an interval of a complete *decade* before the 'second revolution' broke out. In his article 'O dvukh liniakh revoliutsii' (*Sochinenii*, v. VIII, p. 213), comrade Lenin wrote: 'To bring clarity into the alignment of classes in the impending revolution is the main task of a revolutionary party ... This task is being wrongly tackled by in *Nashe slovo* by Trotsky, who is repeating his "original" 1905 theory and refuses to give some thought to the reason why, in the course of ten years, life has been bypassing this splendid theory' [Lenin 1964ff, p. 419. Bukharin's emphasis]. Thus, in the first place, there was a temporary *interruption* in the 'uninterrupted' revolution. Secondly, this interruption and subsequent events *repudiated* comrade Trotsky's theory and his estimation of class forces, for history gave the peasantry a place which had been beforehand excluded from comrade Trotsky's conception. But we will deal with that in the text [original footnote].

10 See K. Marks i F. Engel's, v. III, GIZ, 1921, p. 501 [original footnote]. [Marx and Engels 1958, p. 110].

overthrown, and its place is taken by the poor class of the cities in the special meaning of the term, in alliance with the poor peasantry and the working class. Finally, even this government departs and gives way to the government of the working class. Of course, this is only a chart, as it were, of the process, but the chart is a 'correct' one.¹¹ What then is the essence of the theory of permanent revolution? The essence of the Marxist, that is, the *correct* theory of permanent revolution is that the constant changes in the social content of the revolution are taken into account. It reflects the fact that, in the course of the revolution, the relation between the conflicting classes constantly changes, and that the revolution in its development constantly marches from one stage to another. It

11 However, it should be borne in mind that this chart cannot 'simply' be applied to actual conditions. Here, too, one must calculate the concrete relation of social forces. For example, the peculiarity of the Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution consisted in that it could be conducted to a finish only in the fight against the liberal bourgeoisie, which, already prior to the victory over tsarism, had become a *counter-revolutionary force*. The failure to understand this led the Mensheviks to commit actual treachery. In this connection Lenin wrote: 'These people [Martynov and Martov in the new *Iskra*. N.B.] reason as if they wanted to restrict, to prune down their struggle for freedom ... Such people, said *Vperyod* [the organ of the Bolsheviks. N.B.] vulgarise, philistine fashion, the well-known Marxist thesis concerning the three major forces of the revolution in the nineteenth (and the twentieth) century and its three main stages. The gist of this thesis is that the first stage of revolution is the restriction of absolutism, which satisfies the bourgeoisie; the second is the attainment of the republic, which satisfies the "people" – the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie at large; the third is the socialist revolution, which alone can satisfy the proletariat. "That picture, by and large, is correct", *Vperyod* said. We actually have here an ascent by three different schematic stages, varying according to the classes, which, at best, will accompany us in this ascent. But if we interpret this correct Marxist scheme of three stages to mean that we must measure off in advance, *before any ascent begins*, a very modest part, let us say, not more than one step, if, in keeping with this scheme and before any ascent begins, we sought to "draw up a plan of action in the revolutionary epoch", we should be virtuosi of philistinism' (*Sobranie sochinenii*, v. VI, p. 209). [Lenin 1964zz, p. 465].

In other words, we cannot apply the scheme directly in every case. 'Leaps' are *possible*. It would be sheer philistinism to deny all possibility of skipping stages. However: 'Let no hypercritical reader infer from what we have said that we advocate "tactics aimed" at unconditionally leaping over one step, regardless of the correlation of the social forces' (p. 210) [Lenin 1964zz, p. 466].

Thus, 'in the last analysis' it is the relation of social forces and the calculation of these forces that determines. Fearlessly to lead the *revolution forward*, but at the same time to be able to start out from the given relation of social forces and in this manner actually to maintain the *leadership* in the revolution – these are the tactics of Leninism [original footnote].

marches from the stage of feudalism to the liberal-bourgeois stages. It advances from the liberal-bourgeois stage to the petty-bourgeois stage, and from that it advances to the stage of the proletarian revolution. This is the meaning of the Marxist (and not the Trotskyist) theory of permanent revolution. Can we have any objection to such a theory? No, for it is a correct one. In *this* sense, our revolution proved to be 'uninterrupted'. In Russia, the revolution passed through a series of stages. In February 1917, we had a substitution of the *landlord* regime by the liberal government of the imperialist bourgeoisie accompanied by the establishment of a parallel authority of the workers and peasants (the Soviets). Then followed a fresh regrouping, when the place of the liberal bourgeoisie was taken by various factions of the petty bourgeoisie in alliance with the liberals ('the Coalition Government' with the Mensheviks, SRS, etc.). After that, when we took power in October, the Bolsheviks and Left SRS came into power. After the insurrection of the Left SRS, another change took place, and our party became the sole government party. Thus in Russia, the curve of the revolution, taken as a whole, ascended all the time. (We say 'taken as a whole', because in the period of this advancing course of the revolution, there were some minor halts – it is sufficient to recall the July days; his circumstance must be borne in mind because it is of no small importance *in practice*). This process found its expression in the structure of state power, in the transitions of power from one class to another, from one social group to another, until a permanent position was reached by the *working class* taking power when the *dictatorship of the workers* established a firm foundation for itself and when the Communist Party became the only party holding state power in its hands. If we approach the question in this manner, that is, from the point of view of the actual course of historical events, and we ask ourselves: does this represent the essence of the *Trotskyist* permanent revolution? – we should have to reply: no. AND THIS 'NO' IS PRECISELY WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT. We will approach this *central* question from various points of view. For the moment we will merely draw the fundamental outline of what will serve as the subject of our further exposition.

Had comrade Trotsky pictured to himself the situation in accordance with *reality* as it later appeared, he would not in 1905 have put forward the slogans which he did together with Parvus. As we know, in 1905, comrade Trotsky put forward *against* the Bolsheviks the slogan: 'Down with the Tsar, Up with the Government of the Workers!'¹² In other words, comrade Trotsky in 1905, at the *first* stage of our revolutionary movement, put forward as an *immediate* slogan,

12 I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

a slogan which was fulfilled only at the last stage of this process. Comrade Trotsky had no connection with the actual state of affairs as they existed at that time. In other words, the fundamental political accusation we make against *Trotsky's* theory of permanent revolution is that it ignores all the *intermediate stages, that is, precisely* that which distinguishes permanent revolution; these various stages of the revolution in which various classes exhaust their task and give way to others, demand of us special slogans applicable to each of these stages, directed towards a single goal: *only in this way* can revolution be conducted. Comrade Trotsky, however, placed the final link of the revolution in the beginning of the chain when there were no grounds at all for doing so. He *leaped across* a number of intervening stages, and had our party followed the lead of comrade Trotsky, and had not conducted the revolution in the manner in which it did, we would simply have collapsed. Curious as it may seem, as a matter of fact, comrade Trotsky *killed* the idea of permanent revolution, for if the 'end' is placed at the 'beginning', no process, no transitions, no 'uninterrupted revolution' can take place.

Did comrade Trotsky understand the *uniqueness* of our Revolution? Did comrade Trotsky see how each stage *passed on* ('grew into') to the other? Was he able to 'seize upon' *the necessary link*? All these questions must be replied to in the negative. Comrade Trotsky presented the question in a very simplified form: in Russia *only* a proletarian revolution is possible (comrade Trotsky denied the possibility of a bourgeois revolution even in 1905). In Russia *only* a proletarian revolution is possible, *but this proletarian revolution in a petty-bourgeois country is doomed to failure* unless it receives *state aid* from the victorious proletariat of Western Europe.

'Without the direct *state support* [emphasis is ours – N.B.] of the European proletariat the working class of Russia cannot remain in power and convert its temporary domination into a lasting socialist dictatorship. *Of this there cannot for one moment be any doubt*' (*Nasha revoliutsiia*).¹³

Comrade Trotsky *began* by failing to understand the unique course of our revolution, a uniqueness which consisted in the original interweaving of a *peasant war* against the landlords and a *proletarian revolution*. Comrade Trotsky failed to understand the *uniqueness of the first stage* of this revolution, the essence of which was to clear away the feudal paths and *destroy big private land-ownership*. ('The agrarian question is the basis of the bourgeois revolution in Russia and determines the specific national character of this revolution'. 'The

13 Trotsky 1965b, p. 237.

experience of the first period of the Russian revolution has conclusively proved that it can be victorious only as a peasant agrarian revolution').¹⁴

Comrade Trotsky 'failed to observe' *the stages* by which the bourgeois revolution in Russia grew into a socialist-proletarian revolution.

Furthermore, comrade Trotsky failed to see the particularities which distinguish our socialist revolution from the socialist revolutions in other countries.

Again, Comrade Trotsky failed to see the special *international* conditions which – even *without* the state aid of the victorious Western European proletariat – permit our socialist revolution *to hold on*, to consolidate its position, and to *grow*, ultimately to triumph, together with the victorious working class of other countries.

Even here, comrade Trotsky did his reasoning schematically: *either* a bourgeois revolution, *or* a proletarian revolution; *either* a classical proletarian revolution – in that case permanent victory, *or* a hybrid proletarian revolution, in that case, death. *Either* state aid by the Western European proletariat – in that case, salvation, *or* no such aid – in that case, no salvation.

As a matter of fact, life completely refuted this chart and gave altogether *different answers*. Both bourgeois and proletarian revolution (one merges into the other); *no* state aid from the Western proletariat, *but* for all that aid was forthcoming both from the proletariat and from the colonies (and also 'aid' from the capitalists, who by their internecine *quarrels* assist proletarian states). *No* classical proletarian revolution and yet *not* death, but life, etc. Reality proved *more full of colour* than the dry charts and carefully drawn diagrams of 'permanent revolution'.

Comrade Trotsky's *political impotence* originated in his failure to see reality.

Because Lenin and our party saw all these stages, transitions, and peculiarities of the process, they were able *in reality* on each occasion to seize the *necessary* link and lead the working class and the peasantry to victory.

There are absolutely no grounds for our party to substitute the Leninist theory of our revolution with the 'permanent' theory of comrade Trotsky.

14 An unpublished chapter of the work of comrade Lenin on the agrarian question. See *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 1924, no. 28, pp. 166 and 169 [original footnote]. [Lenin 1962e, pp. 421, 425].

The General Estimate of Classes in the Progress of Our Revolution

We spoke above of the stages of our revolution: now it is necessary to raise the same question and in the same general form, but to examine it from the standpoint of the *struggle of classes* and *class changes*. The arguments among us, as is known, boiled down to a considerable degree to the question of the *workers' and peasants' bloc*, of an alliance *between the working class* and the peasantry, and of the *hegemony* of the proletariat in this 'alliance' or 'bloc'. Now, in the eighth year of our revolution and our dictatorship, we clearly see the *enormity* of this problem, which for the first time was distinctly outlined by Vladimir Il'ich and which later became one of the cornerstones both of the theoretical and practical structure of Bolshevism. Only at the present time has this question come up in all its enormous dimensions. For, essentially, the discussion concerns not only the problem of the worker-peasant alliance here, in the Soviet republics, but it concerns the greatest and, in a well-known sense, the decisive problem of *international revolution*. For such a burning question of modern times as the question of the *colonies*, which is a question of the life and death of capitalism, is, from the point of view of world revolution, nothing more nor less than the question of the alliance between the Western European and American industrial proletariat on the one hand, and the *colonial peasantry* on the other.

It is true that the colonial question, although to a considerable degree a question of attitude towards the peasantry, does not completely boil down to this. It has its own particular features, and it would be wrong to place it under the mark of complete equality. At the same time, it is absolutely clear that, in its social basis, it is a peasant question. If we ask ourselves in what manner the working class at the present moment can undermine the bases of capitalist society, we can say that the working class, which supports colonial insurrection, is actually imposing its hegemony on the peasant colonial movement. When we ask ourselves what will happen in the sphere of world economy, when the working class takes power, we are immediately confronted by the same question about the attitude of the victorious proletariat towards the colonial peasantry. When we ask ourselves why European Social Democracy has completely failed to understand the significance of the peasant question, and paid so little attention to it, and failed to raise the problem which was so characteristic for us, it does not all come down to the fact that our country is an agrarian country, and the other countries are industrial. The other countries too, had their 'agrarian share', only it was not in the metropole, but on the remote colonial periphery. The fact that European Social Democracy paid inadequate attention to the peasant question is undoubtedly connected with the

fact that it failed to articulate the question of the colonies from a revolutionary standpoint. The line of Social Democracy was either directly hostile to the colonial movements (social imperialism) or was silent on it. When comrade Trotsky, absorbed in his 'Europeanism', repeatedly emphasised the Asiatic peasant character of the ideology of the 'immature' proletariat (this was precisely his estimation of the Bolsheviks), there was something in his 'Europeanism' that smacked of the contempt Social Democracy had for the peasant and colonial question, although comrade Trotsky personally devoted considerable attention to the colonial question.

From this general formulation about classes, from this 'European' evaluation of their role, derives comrade Trotsky's completely concrete idea that revolution in Russia must inevitably perish, if no state support is forthcoming from the victorious proletariat.

If comrade Trotsky substitutes abstract schemes for concrete analysis, it must result in conceiving the proletarian revolution as a classical revolution, and regarding all 'non-classical' revolutions as being doomed to failure beforehand. But a classical proletarian revolution is one in which the proletariat is the only class of the 'people'. In other words, such an ideal revolution is possible only in a society where there is no peasantry.

Such an 'ideal' conception, however, does not correspond to reality at all. If we examine the *world economy*, we will find that the proletariat in the true sense of the term represents a small minority of the population. If we have in mind the *largest countries in the world*, we must remember that they consist of a small group of densely populated and proletarianised 'metropolises' in enormous peasant colonies. The greatest part of France is *in Africa*, the greatest part of England is *in Asia*, etc. What will the English proletariat do after their victory, if they do not receive the support and sympathy of the Indian and Egyptian peasants? If it does not lead them into the fight against capitalism? If they do not win their sympathy and their support? If it does not establish its *hegemony*, its *leadership*, over this enormous mass of humanity?

It is quite amazing: Comrade Trotsky knows very well the enormous significance of the colonial question. But alas, this correct view of the colonies cannot possibly be reconciled with the estimation of the peasantry, which comrade Trotsky made in 1905, in his theory of permanent revolution, the correctness of which he stubbornly insists upon up to the present day. In this, comrade Trotsky reveals a complete lack of logic.

It is perfectly clear now what this problem means for the proletariat.

Prior to the seizure of power, the working class must have the support of the peasantry *in the fight against the capitalists and landlords*.

After the seizure of power, the proletariat must secure for itself the support of a considerable section of the peasantry in the *Civil War*, right up to the moment when the proletarian dictatorship has been consolidated.

And after that? Can we really limit ourselves to regarding the peasantry *only* as cannon-fodder in the fight against the capitalists and the large landlords?

No. Once and for all, we must understand the logic of this 'no'. After its victory, the proletariat *must at all costs live* side by side with the peasantry, for the peasantry represents the majority of the population and has great economic and social weight. Only the failure to understand world economic ties can lead one to ignore this aspect of the question. But sooner or later it will inevitably come up. Consequently, it must be realised that the proletariat has *no* choice in this. It is *compelled*, as it builds socialism, to carry the peasantry with it. The proletariat *must learn* to do this, for unless it does so, it will not be able to maintain its rule.

Of course, there are various ways of carrying the peasantry along in accordance with the given circumstances. One must be able to see the transition periods, all the stages, in order to lead correctly. During the discussion on the question of the trade unions, Lenin wrote:

The whole of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a transition period, but we now have, you might say, a heap of new transition periods: the demobilisation of the army, the end of the war, the possibility of having a much longer breathing space in peace than before, and a more solid transition *from the war front to the labour front*. This – and this *ALONE* – is causing a change in the attitude of the proletarian class to the peasant class.¹⁵

The same thing, but to an even greater degree, applies to a number of most important stages of the revolutionary process.

Comrade Trotsky, in his theory of permanent revolution, completely failed to understand:

- 1) The general problem of the peasantry.
- 2) The methods by which the proletariat could lead the peasantry.
- 3) The various stages in the relations between the working class and the peasantry in the course of our revolution.

¹⁵ Lenin 1965h, p. 32.

Comrade Trotsky himself presents the question of the peasantry in bold relief in the preface to his book 1905. Formulating the theory of permanent revolution (*in 1922!*) and emphasising the correctness of this theory, comrade Trotsky wrote:

in order to guarantee its victory, the proletarian vanguard in the very earliest stages of its rule would have to make extremely deep inroads not only into feudal but also into bourgeois property relations. While doing so *it would enter into hostile conflict, not only with all those bourgeois groups ... but also with the broad masses of the peasantry, with whose collaboration it – the proletariat – had come into power.* The contradictions between a workers' government and an overwhelming majority of peasants in a backward country could be resolved only on an international scale, in the arena of a world proletarian revolution. Having, by virtue of historical necessity, burst the narrow bourgeois-democratic confines of the Russian revolution, the victorious proletariat would be compelled also to burst its national and state confines, that is to say, it would have to strive consciously for the Russian revolution to become the prologue to a world revolution.¹⁶

The latter part of this quotation is correct. But that is not the point at all. The point is that according to comrade Trotsky, the proletariat *MUST INEVITABLY* come into irreconcilable conflict with the broad masses of the peasantry, and that in a country with a petty-bourgeois majority, the proletariat *will not be able to handle* this problem and that as a result of this inevitable *conflict* the proletarian domination must collapse, unless it can obtain *state* support from outside.

The first thing one notices (now that considerable experience has been accumulated of the international movement) is that comrade Trotsky's 'solution' is not a solution at all, just as his 'permanent revolution' in fact is not permanent revolution at all.

For if the conflict between the proletariat and the peasantry is *inevitable*, inescapable etc., then it is inevitable and inescapable even in the event of the victory of the proletariat all over the *world*. The peasantry constitutes the overwhelming majority of the population of our planet. If the proletariat does not have the means by which to lead this peasantry, then, *EITHER* the international revolution is also doomed to failure, *OR* it must be postponed

16 Trotsky 1972b, pp. vi–vii.

(according to Cunow) until we have a proletarian majority throughout the world. We can hardly believe that we will have to break down the 'terrestrial frontiers' and expect aid from the purely proletarian *celestial* forces, even in the form of 'state support'.

Thus, if we develop the problem and present it in its full scope, it will be easily seen that comrade Trotsky merely *deflects* the problem, but does not solve it.

Comrade Trotsky's error lies in the fact that he considers the conflict between the proletariat and the peasantry to be *inevitable*, whereas it is merely *possible*. And this is by no means the same thing. It will be inevitable only if the proletarian regime proves to be less advantageous to the peasantry than the bourgeois regime was, and if the peasantry throws off the leadership of the proletariat. But it is not at all inevitable and *will not happen* if the party of the victorious proletariat takes care to support and strengthen the worker-peasant bloc. Consideration of how to do this in concrete terms is beyond the scope of this work.

From the estimation of the peasantry given above, follows the *general methods of influencing it*, which, by the way, comrade Trotsky formulated in the period of reaction. This is what comrade Lenin wrote on this matter:

Lastly, *the most fallacious* of Trotsky's opinions that Comrade Martov quotes and considers to be 'just' is the third, viz.: 'even if they (the peasantry) do this ("support the regime of working-class democracy") with no more political understanding than they usually support a bourgeois regime'. *The proletariat cannot count on the ignorance and prejudices of the peasantry as the powers that be under a bourgeois regime count and depend on them, nor can it assume that in time of revolution the peasantry will remain in their usual state of political ignorance and passivity* [Bukharin's emphasis].

'Tsel' bor'by proletariata v nashei revoliutsii', v. XI, part I, p. 229¹⁷

And in the era of proletarian dictatorship, when it was necessary to move from words to deeds, when the situation was particularly difficult, Lenin wrote:

The greater the extent and scope of historic events, the greater is the number of people participating in them, and, contrariwise, the more profound the change we wish to bring about, the more must we rouse an

17 Lenin 1963q, p. 374.

interest and an intelligent attitude towards it, and convince more millions and tens of millions of people that it is necessary.

'Doklad Sov. Nar. Kom. ot 22 dekabria 1920 goda', *Sobr. soch.* 1923, v. XII, p. 413¹⁸

Does this not express an altogether different attitude towards the peasantry? And does not this attitude follow logically from the general estimation of the peasantry as an essential ally in the struggle of the proletariat?

But in order to be able to 'convince' the peasantry, we must be able to 'hook them' by the proper link, and here more than ever is revealed the incapacity of Trotskyism even to *address* this question properly.

In 1905, Trotsky evaded the agrarian revolution and failed to understand that this was the *crux of the era*. The Mensheviks also failed to understand this, and Lenin quite rightly pointed out that they 'while fighting Narodism ... overlooked the historically real and progressive historical *content* of Narodism as a theory of the mass *petty-bourgeois* struggle of democratic capitalism', and Lenin described this 'idea' as 'monstrous', 'idiotic' and 'renegade' (see Lenin on the Prussian and American paths of development. 'Pis'mo k Skvortsovu', *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, May 1924, p. 178).¹⁹

Comrade Trotsky even now asserts that his estimation of the driving forces of the revolution was correct, and it contained no 'leaping across the peasantry', and that he had no intention of 'underestimating' the peasantry. Trotsky is very angry with his critics on this account. He writes: 'One of the favourite arguments of certain circles [!] during recent times consists of pointing out – mainly by indirection – that I “underestimate” the rôle of the peasantry. But one would seek in vain among my adversaries for an analysis of this question ... (*Novyi kurs*, p. 50). *One cannot discover in my writings of that time the slightest attempt to leap over the peasantry*' (p. 51; our emphasis).²⁰

This is how comrade Lenin evaluated the position of comrade Trotsky in 1915 during the war:

'From the Bolsheviks Trotsky's original theory has borrowed their call for a decisive proletarian revolutionary struggle and for the conquest of political power by the proletariat, while from the Mensheviks it has borrowed "repudiation" of the peasantry's role' ('O dvukh liniakh revoliutsii', *Sobr. soch.*, v. XIII, p. 213).

18 Lenin 1966i, p. 498.

19 Lenin 1963p, p. 119.

20 Trotsky 1965a, pp. 59, 61.

"Trotsky is in fact helping the liberal-labour politicians in Russia, who by "repudiation" of the role of the peasantry understand a *refusal* to raise up the peasants for the revolution!" (p. 214).²¹

Comrade Lenin then gives a brief but brilliant description of the stages of the revolution and the content of these stages and our tasks:

That (that is, rousing the peasantry. N.B.) is the crux of the matter today. The proletariat are fighting, and will fight valiantly, to win power, for a republic, for the confiscation of the land, *i.e.* to win over the peasantry, make *full* use of their revolutionary powers, and get the '*non-proletarian masses of the people*' to take part in liberating *bourgeois* Russia from *military-feudal* 'imperialism' (tsarism). The proletariat will at once (our emphasis. N.B.) utilise this ridding of bourgeois Russia of tsarism and the rule of the landowners, not to aid the rich peasants in their struggle against the rural workers, but to bring about the socialist revolution in alliance with the proletarians of Europe.²²

Thus, in spite of comrade Trotsky, Comrade Lenin considered that Trotsky's theory did underestimate the role of the peasantry. And however much comrade Trotsky would like to avoid acknowledging this fundamental and cardinal error, he cannot. One cannot play at hide and seek. One must clearly, precisely and definitely say who is right. For it is perfectly clear that before us are two *different* theories: according to one theory, the peasantry is an ally, according to the other, it is an inevitable foe; according to one theory, we can conduct a successful fight for hegemony over the peasantry, according to the other theory, this must fail; according to one theory, a sharp conflict with the peasantry is inevitable, according to the other, this conflict may be avoided if our policy is cleverly conducted, etc.

Is it not clear that this 'permanent' question of a 'permanent' theory is the 'permanent' contradiction between Trotskyism and Leninism?

The Stages of Our Revolution and Comrade Trotsky's Theory

It is now time to move from these general formulations of the question to a concrete formulation of the question, *i.e.* to analyse how our party and how

²¹ Lenin 1964ff, p. 420.

²² Ibid.

comrade Trotsky viewed the individual stages of the revolution, how the party and how comrade Trotsky evaluated the composition of class forces that was typical of 1905, of the subsequent era, of the February revolution, of the later period up to October, of the October Revolution, of the post-October period, and, finally, of the present moment. Then it will be easy to see for ourselves that all of comrade Trotsky's mistakes, which we have noted here in general terms, are repeated at each of these stages, and that they comprise the very essence of the *Trotskyist*, permanent revolution.

At that time, the Bolsheviks' position came down to the following. We judged the 1905 revolution to be a bourgeois-democratic revolution, which toppled the landowner, toppled the landowning government, gave land to the peasants, cast off the chains of feudalism and established – and here we discerned our own goal – the revolutionary dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry, although at this stage of development this dictatorship was not yet socialist in nature. Against this view, comrade Trotsky levelled a very concrete accusation. He said that such a situation, firstly, was impossible, and, secondly, that the Bolshevik theory was reactionary; the Bolsheviks – stated comrade Trotsky – had, alongside their well-known revolutionary sides, a reactionary side, and this reactionary side of Bolshevism consisted of nothing less than their *desire to collaborate with the muzhik*. It is possible to read this in comrade Trotsky's 1905, from which we have drawn only a couple of quotations that immediately clarify comrade Trotsky's evaluation of the state of affairs. Comrade Trotsky wrote: it is proposed 'that the proletariat's political self-limitation should be supplemented with an objective antisocialist "safeguard" in the form of the muzhik as collaborator' (p. 284, 2nd ed., 1922).²³ What does this quotation actually mean? It means the following: the Bolsheviks proposed completing the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and doing this by means of a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the working class and peasantry which would destroy once and for all the final remnants of the feudal regime.

So what is comrade Trotsky objecting to here? He says: this was the *revolutionary* side of Bolshevism, because they wanted to establish the kind of regime which was built with the power of the muzhik alongside the proletariat. What is a muzhik? A muzhik is a petty proprietor. What is a petty proprietor? From the standpoint of the advance towards socialism, it is a reactionary force. If you Bolsheviks want to have the muzhik as your ally in the government (this was all

23 Trotsky 1972b, p. 316. This is not a verbatim translation of the original, and has been edited by Trotsky at a later date. For the original, see Trotskii 1922, p. 284.

said in 1905!)),²⁴ then you are reactionaries, because you want this reactionary, anti-socialist 'guarantee' that will lead to the ruin of the socialist proletariat.

Comrade Trotsky continued:

'while the anti-revolutionary aspects of Menshevism have already become fully apparent, those of Bolshevism are likely to become *a serious threat only in the event of victory*' (ibid., p. 285).²⁵

In a note to the 1922 edition, comrade Trotsky kindly 'explained' this piquant point as follows:

'As we know, this (i.e. the 'enormous peril' when the Bolsheviks take power) never materialized because, under the leadership of Comrade Lenin, the Bolsheviks changed their policy line on this most important matter (not without inner struggle) in the spring of 1917, that is, before the seizure of power' (p. 285).²⁶

Below, we will see the absurdity of this statement that the party, while still under the leadership of Lenin, went over 'in the spring of 1917', to comrade Trotsky's position. In the meantime, we can note here that this 'idea', although very comforting to the author's vanity, explains why comrade Trotsky so feared the *degeneration* of our party. In fact: Bolshevism was muzhikophilic, in comrade Trotsky's opinion; it had muzhik-like, anti-revolutionary features; the government of the Bolsheviks was fraught with the 'enormous peril' of anti-proletarian, peasant, petty-proprietorial politics. 'Under Lenin's leadership', it 'rearmed itself', having taken the 'weapon' of comrade Trotsky's 'proletarian' theory. The 'peril' was not realised. But along came Lenin, Lenin who 'in the spring of 1917' was bold enough to learn from Trotsky 'on the most important issue'. What was to be done? The party had to be strenuously 'made permanent' [*napermanenchivat*] (hence the prolific literary output to this end), for this was the *socialist* guarantee against the 'anti-socialist', in the person of the 'muzhik-collaborator', that was inherent in the *old* Bolshevism. The younger generation of the party, a generation which had not yet been poisoned by the 'anti-socialist' 'great peril', had to be educated as quickly as possible in the 'new course'. And if this sermon should be rejected by the party (for which the old guard would be to blame), then this would mean the threat of petty-bourgeois '*degeneration*'.

24 Trotsky's view of the reactionary nature of the muzhik is expounded in Trotsky 1972b, e.g. pp. 55–6, 187–96.

25 Trotsky 1972b, pp. 316–17.

26 Trotsky 1972b, p. 317. The first bracketed phrase is Bukharin's addition. The translation 'changed their policy line' in this edition does not do justice to the original Russian: 'ideologically rearmed themselves' [*sovershil ... svoe ideinoe perevooruzhenie*].

We can see by the way that last year's cries of degeneration of the old guard have a very deep underlying cause, closely linked and intertwined with the 'theory of permanent revolution', which in Trotsky's solemn declaration, was justified 'completely and utterly'.²⁷

But let us move to the crux of the matter.

In 1905, comrade Trotsky deemed it politically expedient to speak out against the 'muzhik'. This is a fact. He saw a 'terrible menace' there.²⁸ In 1905, comrade Trotsky fought against the slogan of the Bolsheviks: 'the dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry'.²⁹ Was this position *politically* correct? Did it fit the situation? Was the Trotsky-Parvus slogan correct at that time: 'No Tsar, but a workers' government'?³⁰ These questions need answers.

Lenin wrote on 1905 and on the *peculiarities* of 1905, and also on the subsequent revolutionary tasks: 'This agrarian question is *now* the *national* question [...] in Russia' (*Lenin o Prusskom i amer. putiakh razvitiia, pis'mo k Skvortsovu*).³¹

Was it right that the 'crux' was *there*? Was it right that the basic task of the moment was to raise the muzhik against the landholder [*pomeshchik*] and together with landholding agriculture destroy its autocratic, political superstructure? Was it right to adopt the course of *exhausting the revolutionary potential of the peasantry*?

Of course it was right. That was the *only* way to formulate the question at that time (remember that at that time in Russia there was still no trust industry [*trestirovannaia promyshlennost'*], there was no imperialist war, there was no ferment in the West-European proletariat, etc., i.e. there were none of those *unique* historical conditions which had already developed by 'spring 1917'; instead there was the forgetfulness and ignorance [*temnota*] of the muzhik, who *had not yet stirred himself* against the landowner and was only just waking up to political life). The immediate task was for the working class *to use the struggle for land to lead the muzhik to revolution against the semi-feudal regime as a whole*.

27 This may have a reference to the following statement by Trotsky: 'the idea of the permanent revolution coincides completely and utterly with the fundamental, strategical line of Bolshevism' (Trotsky 1965a, p. 61).

28 Trotsky 1972b, p. 33.

29 See, for example, Trotsky 1972b, p. 314.

30 The quotation is attributed to Parvus, see *Istoriia RKP(b)*, p. 278.

31 Lenin 1963 [1924], 'Letter to I. I. Skvortsov-Stepanov', *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, Moscow: Progress Publishers, p. 120. Missing and unacknowledged from the quotation is the phrase indicated by [...]: 'of bourgeois development'.

Comrade Trotsky did not look at that option at all. He did not understand the demands which history made on the revolutionary party.

If we examine the 1905 revolution, the entire stage as a whole, and ask ourselves why the revolution of 1905 was crushed, why it suffered defeat, it is now easy to answer this question. The 1905 revolution failed because no alliance [*smychka*] was achieved between the urban movement and the agrarian peasant movement. The revolution of 1905 peaked in December 1905 in the city – this was the December insurrection of the Moscow workers. The high point of the agrarian movement, when the peasants put the landowners' estates to the torch, came in 1907; in other words, the peasant rearguard began to join the revolution when the workers' revolutionary vanguard in the cities had been crushed and destroyed. And we suffered defeat because no alliance actually existed between these two classes. We suffered defeat in spite of the course adopted *by our party* vis-à-vis the peasantry. And comrade Trotsky, who criticised us at that time because we paid too much attention to the muzhik, was wrong twice over. Under his leadership, the revolution could never have succeeded, for comrade Trotsky, despite all his reassurances, *leaped over* the peasant stage of the revolution. His policy was wrong at its core. His evaluation of the class forces in no way corresponded to reality. How can anyone maintain, as comrade Trotsky does, that the *essence of Bolshevism* resides in the theory of permanent revolution?!

'Trotsky's major mistake', writes Lenin about this period at the same stage of the revolution,

is that he ignores the bourgeois character of the revolution, and *has no clear conception of the transition from this revolution to the socialist revolution* (our emphasis. N.B.). This major mistake leads to those mistakes on side issues which comrade Martov *repeats* when he quotes a couple of them with sympathy and approval. Not to leave matters in the confused state to which comrade Martov has reduced them by his exposition, we shall at least expose the fallacy of those arguments of Trotsky which have won the approval of Comrade Martov. A coalition of the proletariat and the peasantry 'presupposes either that the peasantry will come under the sway of one of the existing bourgeois parties, or that it will form a powerful independent party' [Lenin is quoting from Trotsky. F.C.]. This is obviously untrue both from the standpoint of general theory and from that of the experience of the Russian revolution. A 'coalition' of classes does *not at all* presuppose *either* the existence of any particular powerful party, *or* parties in general. This is only confusing classes with parties. A 'coalition' of the specified classes *does not in the least* imply *either* that one of

the existing bourgeois parties will establish its sway over the peasantry *or* that the peasants should form a powerful independent party ... The experience of the Russian revolution shows that 'coalitions' of the proletariat and the peasantry were formed *scores and hundreds of times*, in the most diverse forms, without any 'powerful *independent* party' [Bukharin's emphasis. F.C.] of the peasantry.

v. XI, I, pp. 226–7³²

What is the role of the peasantry? Trotsky asked in 1905, and answered: either it will be a direct agency of the bourgeoisie, or the peasantry will have its own powerful, *independent* party.

This led to the conclusion about the impossibility of a dictatorship of the working class and of the peasantry, for in both instances sharp conflict between the working class and the peasantry would be inevitable. In other words, the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat has already been excluded in advance. Trotsky was already *afraid* of the peasantry at a time when it was necessary to *urge* it to struggle against the landowner. Trotsky was afraid of the kind of coalition which *alone could provide* victory over tsarism.

Here consequently was another viewpoint, which led in the course of the revolution to a completely different role for the peasantry, and which did not understand what made up the heart of Bolshevism, and which would have led to the failure of the entire revolution if it had gained sway in the ranks of the leading proletarian party.

Let us move on now to the next stage of our revolution, bypassing the era of reaction when comrade Trotsky was completely with the Mensheviks. Let us take the February Revolution of 1917. What did Lenin, who, according to Trotsky, was 'rearming', and had deferred to the theory of permanent revolution on the 'most important question' (the peasantry), write at the time, what did this ingenious proletarian strategist say in 1917, twelve years after the first revolution, under different, more mature conditions, after capitalism in Russia had taken the greatest stride forward, after years of imperialist war had passed, after the greatest revolutionary stirring of the popular masses had become a fact, and after the signs of West European revolution had already appeared? How did Lenin evaluate this *new stage*? He said, in support of his theses about Soviet power (those same theses which Trotsky described as completely in his spirit!): 'But are we not in danger of falling into subjectivism, of wanting to arrive at

32 Lenin 1963q, p. 371. Lenin's quotation is from Trotsky's *Results and Prospects* (Trotsky 1965b, p. 206).

the socialist revolution by “skipping” the bourgeois-democratic revolution – which is not yet completed and has not yet exhausted the peasant movement? *I might be incurring this danger if I said: “No Tsar, but a workers’ government”*.”³³ So according to Lenin, if he said in 1917 what Trotsky was saying in 1905, then he, Lenin, would run the risk of immediately skipping several steps and falling into a void. Lenin continued: ‘But I did *not* say that, I said something else. I said that there *can be no* government (barring a bourgeois government) in Russia other than that of the Soviets of Workers’, Agricultural Labourers’, Soldiers’, and Peasants’ Deputies. I said that power in Russia now can pass from Guchkov and Lvov *only* to these Soviets. And in these Soviets, as it happens, it is the peasants, the soldiers, i.e., petty bourgeoisie, who preponderate, to use a [...] class characterisation, and not a Menshevik, man-in-the-street, professional characterisation’ (v. XIV, 1).³⁴ And so Lenin said: it would be stupid to think that our revolution had entered a phase in which we are now able coin a slogan of pure proletarian dictatorship (‘No Tsar, but a *workers’* government’).³⁵ Why would this be stupid? Because the agrarian peasant movement has not yet died out. The peasantry has not yet brought its own agrarian revolution to a conclusion, it has not *yet* wiped out the landowner, it is *still* moving forward. It is our task to make use of this revolutionary force and use this stage to drive the revolution further *towards socialism*. Here too he paid most attention to the heterogeneity of the situation. For he thought *dialectically*. The Bolshevik slogans and ideas of 1905 in general have been confirmed, but in *concrete terms*, ‘things have worked out *differently*; they are more original, more peculiar, more variegated’ (‘Letters on Tactics. Evaluation of the Moment’).³⁶ The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry ‘has already been realised, but in a highly original manner’,³⁷ for it stood side-by-side with the power of the bourgeoisie (the Soviets and the Provisional Government). This is the uniqueness, these are the special conditions of 1917. ‘According to the old way of thinking, the rule of the bourgeoisie could and should be followed by the rule of the proletariat and the peasantry, by their dictatorship. In real life, however, things have already turned out differently; there has been an extremely original, novel and unprecedented *interlacing of the one with the other*’ (ibid.).³⁸

33 Lenin 1964b, p. 48.

34 Ibid. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: ‘scientific, Marxist term’.

35 Ibid.

36 Lenin 1964b, p. 44.

37 Lenin 1964b, p. 45.

38 Lenin 1964b, pp. 45–6.

In this way, starting from this original situation, Lenin said that it was necessary to pass to the *next* revolutionary class, i.e. to look at the petty-bourgeois Soviets, but he did not say 'Soviets with communists' – he emphasised the petty-bourgeois character of the Soviets, in which the peasants are in the majority. Not a direct leap to a workers' dictatorship, but careful steps over all obstacles, thorough consideration of all possibilities, meticulous analysis of all transitional steps in their varied forms. Is this in any way similar to comrade Trotsky's slogans and theory? Let's look at what Vladimir Il'ich wrote vis-à-vis our policy in the realm of *economic relations*. Let's quote from the article: 'Odin iz korennykh voprosov' (*Sobr. Soch.*, izd. 21 g., t. XIV, ch. 1). Comrade Lenin wrote:

Can the majority of the *peasants* in Russia demand and carry out the nationalisation of the land? Certainly it can. Would this be a socialist revolution? It would not. It would *still* be a bourgeois revolution, for the nationalisation of the land is a measure that is not incompatible with the existence of capitalism. It is, however, a *blow* to private ownership of the most important means of production.

Lenin continued:

Can the *majority of the peasants* in Russia declare for the merging of all the banks into one, for having a branch of a single nation-wide state bank in each village? It can, because the convenience and advantage for the people of such a measure are unquestionable. Even the 'defencists' could be for such a measure, as it would heighten Russia's capacity for 'defence' enormously. Is it economically possible to immediately effect such a merger of all the banks? Without a doubt, it is quite possible. Would this be a socialist measure? No, this would *not yet* be socialism. Further. Can the majority of the peasants in Russia declare in favour of the Sugar Manufacturers' Syndicate passing into the hands of the government, to be controlled by the workers and peasants, and the price of sugar being lowered? It certainly can, for that would benefit the majority of the people. Is that possible economically? It is quite possible ...³⁹

Let's turn our attention to Lenin's approach to the question. He asks constantly: what is '*the peasant*' saying? This is no accident. On the contrary, this reveals

39 Lenin 1964aaa, p. 194.

the greatest revolutionary clear-headedness which is typical of the proletarian leader. Does this quotation show that the Bolsheviks had adopted comrade Trotsky's position of permanent revolution? Nothing of the sort. And in terms of the transition from one stage to the next on the *economic* course, comrade Lenin 'transferred' in the most careful way the masses into the next revolutionary class. Why was this necessary and why was it done *in that way*? So as *not to be severed from the peasant base*, so as to *drag* incrementally the *muzhik* along behind the working class. For Lenin did not see the peasantry as an inevitable foe intent on smashing all our skulls, but as a potential ally which will sometimes grumble and will now and then give the working class headaches, but which must potentially be brought to the proletarian cause so that it is one of the component forces in our struggle for a proletarian economic regime. Again, in 1917 there is no 'worker government', which comrade Trotsky was still talking about in 1905, and, taking issue with this, Lenin said: 'I am not saying "No Tsar, but a workers' government", I am saying: petty-bourgeois Soviets. I am not saying: "socialism" now, I am saying: there are these and those measures which are beneficial to the muzhik, which are not yet socialism, but which at the same time are delivering a blow to the rule of private property'.⁴⁰ The reader can see here the ingenious ability to see the transition from one step to the next, the ingenious ability to seize the uniqueness of the moment, and the ingenious ability to grasp the link which must be grasped if the revolution is to move from one stage to the next! Let's move on. Let move to October. Two facts must not be forgotten here: on the one hand, the revolutionary government that grew out of the October victory was a *coalition of Bolsheviks and Left SRs* – on the other hand, we adopted the agrarian programme of the *SRs* and put it into practice, at a time when at the crucial moment the *SR* intelligentsia organisation, which was relying upon the muzhik, *became scared* of that same muzhik who was starting to seize the estates. Lenin, proceeding from the idea that it was necessary to attract the peasantry, devised a bold, tactical manoeuvre, and said: 'You peasants, under the leadership of the *SRs*, have come up with this programme. Splendid. We will help you to put it into practice'.⁴¹ At that time, the *Left SRs* were in fact still wagering on the peasant, and they were popular with the peasantry. Everybody remembers how popular, for example, Maria Spiridonova was at that time. And comrade Trotsky at that

40 I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

41 I have been unable to locate the source of this quotation. Lenin discusses the role of the peasants and the adoption by the Bolsheviks of essentially the *SR* land program in Lenin 1964bbb, pp. 257–61.

time was not stammering on about an 'anti-socialist safeguard' in the form of the 'muzhik as collaborator'!⁴² With this policy of adopting the SR programme and bringing the Left SRs into the government, *we brought the peasant masses in their millions into the proletarian cause*. Was this right? It was right. And does this fit with the slogan: 'No Tsar, but a workers' government'? *Even this* does not fit. Does recognition of the correctness of this policy fit with the polemics about the anti-socialist safeguard in the form of the 'muzhik as collaborator'? Of course, it does not fit. That is a completely different matter. And again, is it possible after all this to say that in all of Trotsky's writings with the 1905 stamp there was nothing that contradicted the Bolshevik position? And can it be claimed that Bolshevism 'rearmed itself' according to Trotsky's position? Trotsky's words were taken out of context, he said something totally different.

And then, what about us? Then we had a further stage. By what course did we deepen our revolution? By being forced to ignite the class struggle in the countryside. In October, the working class and almost all the peasantry, including the kulak, were against the landowner. Why? Because the kulak too had an interest in the destruction of the landowner.

All the masses came with us to storm the landowner. Was it right that we had to move *all the masses* to that point? It was right. And did the revolution stay at that point? No, it moved forward. By what path? *By means of stratification of the peasantry and a bitter class struggle* in the countryside. How did this express itself? At that time, it found its expression in the policy of the committees of the village poor [*kombedy*] which were necessary then. What did this policy of the committees of the village poor lead to *at the top*? It caused the Left SRs to raise an insurrection against the policy of the *kombedy*, and then the kulaks and some of the middle peasants [*seredniaki*] abandoned us, and we began to rely on the poor peasants [*krest'ianskaia bednota*] and some middle peasants. And this is how the *dictatorship of the working class* developed in its present form. Consequently, the revolution did not develop as simply as comrade Trotsky imagined. Comrade Trotsky put the dictatorship of the working class at the very beginning of the process, but he did not see the stages and approaches to this dictatorship, he did not see the actual correlation of forces, he did not see the changes in this correlation, he did not see the stages of the revolution, he did not see the need to change the slogans, i.e. he did not see everything that was needed to successfully lead the revolution. And now he says: 'It all happened

42 Trotsky 1972b, p. 316. This is not a verbatim translation of the original, and has been edited by Trotsky at a later date. For the original, see Trotskii 1922, p. 284.

according to my view – therefore I turned out to be right'.⁴³ Nothing happened according to your view! Because if we had acted 'according to Trotsky', we would *never* have reached the goal. Precisely because the party acted 'according to Lenin', and not according to Trotsky, that is why we achieved the workers' dictatorship. And that is precisely why we will continue 'according to Lenin', i.e. by dragging the peasantry along behind us, and by relying on it, we will get to socialism.

The Uniqueness of Our Revolution

Let's sum up our analysis: this can be done best by looking at Trotsky's general evaluation on the basis of everything that has happened and Lenin's evaluation done already *after* we had power in our hands, already *after* the workers' dictatorship had been established in the country. In 'The Lessons of October', comrade Trotsky writes the following:

The February Revolution, if we look at it as a separate revolution, was a bourgeois revolution. But as a bourgeois revolution, it came too late and lacked any kind of permanence. Shot through with contradictions, which immediately found their expression in dual power, it had either to become a direct prelude to a proletarian revolution – which is what happened – or, under some kind of bourgeois oligarchic regime, to cast Russia back into a semi-colonial existence. Consequently, the period following the February overthrow can be seen in two ways: *either* as a period of consolidation, development or completion of the 'democratic' revolution, *or* as a period of preparation for the proletarian revolution.

TROTSKY, *Sochin.*, t. III, 1917 g., ch. 1, str. XXVIII⁴⁴

And so comrade Trotsky posed the question in the following way: we look at the post-February period and the February Revolution *either* in one way *or* in another. We must *choose*. *Either* this was a period of reinforcement and completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution, and then *only this* was certain. Or we should look at the same period as a prologue, as a prelude to the proletarian revolution, and then *only that* was certain. This is comrade Trotsky's

43 I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

44 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 92.

formulation, 'either-or', 'or-or'. The general evaluation is done, the balance sheet drawn up.

What was comrade Lenin's evaluation? Let's open volume 18 of his collected works, to the speech on the fourth anniversary of Soviet power. The speech refers to the period when we had already been in power for four years. What did Lenin say? The following:

Both the anarchists and the petty-bourgeois democrats (i.e., the Mensheviks and the SRS, who are the Russian counterparts of that international socialist type) have talked and are still talking an incredible lot of nonsense about the relation between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist (*that is*, proletarian) revolution. [...] We have consummated the bourgeois-democratic revolution as nobody had done before. We are advancing towards the socialist revolution consciously, firmly and unswervingly, knowing *that it is not separated from the bourgeois-democratic revolution by a Chinese Wall*, and knowing too that (in the last analysis) *struggle alone* will determine how far we shall advance in the future (he is writing this after four years of Soviet power! – N.B.), what part of this immense and lofty task we shall accomplish, and to what extent we shall succeed in consolidating our victories.⁴⁵

How carefully formulated! Another quotation from the same piece:

The Kautskys, Hilferdings, Martovs, [...] MacDonalds, Turatis and other heroes of 'Two and-a-Half' Marxism were incapable of understanding *this* relation between the bourgeois-democratic and the proletarian-socialist revolutions. *The first develops into the second. The second, in passing, solves the problems of the first. The second consolidates the work of the first. Struggle, and struggle alone, decides how far the second succeeds in outgrowing the first.*⁴⁶

45 Lenin 1966d, pp. 51–2 [Bukharin's emphasis]. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'The last four years have proved to the hilt that our interpretation of Marxism on this point, and our estimate of the experience of former revolutions were correct'.

46 Lenin 1966d, p. 54 (Bukharin's emphasis). The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'Chernovs, Hillquits, Longuets'.

Look at the different formulations of the question! For Trotsky, it is *either* a democratic-bourgeois *or* a socialist revolution. But for Lenin? For Lenin, this is not what it is about at all. He says: a Chinese Wall must never separate one stage from the next. It is impossible to make an 'either-or' choice. The uniqueness of the Russian Revolution is that one type of revolution will grow into another. If the question is decided from the point of view of a formally logically scheme, then Trotsky is 'correct' all down the line. But if the question is decided from the point of view of the living, dialectical reality and Lenin's battle skill (after all, his skill *is* the revolutionary dialectic), then comrade Trotsky's entire dramatic 'plan' remains moribund, lifeless, and exists only on paper. But Leninist theory conformed to reality, to the most ingenious 'practice of leadership' of which Lenin was such a master; for in order to grapple with the chaos of life, with the extreme complexity of events, when the correlation of classes is changing with kaleidoscopic speed, when new issues are piling up, and new slogans are needed, then there is no place for such crude work (even if expressed in a literary form) as comrade Trotsky's. *Here it is necessary to pull the strings all the time*, making use of the circumstances and directing these circumstances towards one end. The correlation of classes has changed – it is still necessary to take baby steps, discard the other slogan, and pursue a political line in such a way as not to fall into the abyss or not to be wide of the mark. Everybody can see now how right comrade Trotsky was when he said: I am not at all guilty of failing to appreciate the peasantry – He is guilty all around! – I am not at all guilty of skipping various stages. – He is guilty all around!

That the proletarian dictatorship worked out in the end – he is right about this. There are no disagreements on that. But when he claims that the Bolsheviks embraced the theory of 'permanent revolution' and therefore achieved the workers dictatorship, that is sheer self-deception. And now that the country again finds itself at a turning point, it is quite natural for us to say that, with comrade Trotsky persisting with his mistakes, raising the broad question of the peasantry and the question of permanent revolution, if they continue to hold the viewpoint of the permanent revolution and want to turn the entire party onto this path, we cannot take this path, because we do not want to give up the Leninist position, without which our cause will fail. And therefore we must ideologically liquidate Trotskyism, and win over the entire party under the Leninist banner by any means: for the issue of the worker-peasant bloc is the central issue, it is the issue of all issues.

We would like to say a few words about the general analysis of our revolution at a different period, namely the period *after the seizure* of power by the working class.

What was original about Lenin's contribution to our understanding of our revolution as it developed after the seizure of power? There are a number of things here which have not yet been adequately analysed in our literature, and which must be examined. Generally speaking, each of us should re-read Lenin's works, because they have one defining feature: he wrote so simply that many comrades, especially amongst the intelligentsia, missed it: everything seemed very 'simple', although these were not 'simple' things that were being pondered. And now, when we have experienced a whole series of woes, and when an analysis of our revolution has emerged from these 'trifling' little questions, the question about the relationship of the working class to the peasantry, etc., it is extremely valuable to review again and again everything that Vladimir Il'ich wrote.

Let's take the question of the future prospects of our revolution. Comrade Trotsky asserts that his analysis of the motive forces of the revolution, an analysis he produced in 1905 – is correct. But if this analysis is correct, then this means that before the victory of the working class, i.e. before a proletarian revolution in Western Europe, we would almost inevitably have to fail on account of our anti-revolutionary collaborator. Meanwhile, according to Lenin, as we have seen, our task is to 'get along with the muzhik'. So Lenin defined the general line for our behaviour. Lenin did not say at all that if the seizure of power by the working class in the West did not succeed, then we would have to flee. Why? Because, if we act sensibly, we will get along with the muzhik. The psychology of last year's Trotskyist opposition is now becoming so clear; there is a stumbling block in the revolution, conflict between the proletariat and the peasantry is on its way. How is it possible not to despair and cry out: 'Guard, save us!' But meanwhile the situation is by no means desperate: if we do not act foolishly, if we keep to the line of the worker-peasant bloc, we will endure. Just don't be foolish, just don't make big mistakes, just take the greatest care on this very point, just don't shout unnecessarily at the muzhik, and try to pursue a policy which preserves the leading role of the proletariat. It seems to us that the contradictions are based on a contradiction in the very deep theoretical preconditions, which, as far as we can determine, have not yet been analysed by anyone, but which should be, and doubtlessly will be, analysed in the course of our future, literary and theoretical arguments. As a matter of fact, what is the common, book-learned [*knizhnyi*] view of the socialist revolution? It might be formulated something like this: if the proletariat is relatively small in number, if it exists in a country with an overwhelming majority of peasants and, consequently, with a commodity economy [*melkoe khoziaistvo*], then this proletariat, should it come to power, will never be able to cope with the enormity of the tasks, and this proletariat will inevitably perish –

one way or another. This is the viewpoint that emerges from the common, book-learned, schoolboy explanation of the question of socialist revolution; we have to say that this explanation resides – alas! – in the minds of a very wide circle of the members of our own party.

And comrade Lenin criticised this view. Unfortunately, his relatively small piece has not been exposed to the necessary analysis (we are not saying with this that the ideas he has been putting out have not been worked through by him). We have in mind his splendid article on Sukhanov. It is theoretically brilliant in the full sense of the word. It seems to us highly fitting to quote several passages from these truly brilliant notes, which Vladimir Il'ich wrote while he was very ill.

'They (SDs. N.B.) all call themselves Marxists, but their conception of Marxism is impossibly pedantic. They have completely failed to understand what is decisive in Marxism, namely, its revolutionary dialectics. They have even absolutely failed to understand Marx's plain statements that in times of revolution the utmost flexibility is demanded, and have even failed to notice, for instance, the statements Marx made ... expressing the hope of combining the peasant war in Germany, which might create a revolutionary situation, with the working-class movement' (p. 117, v. XVIII, part. II).⁴⁷

... [T]hey have seen capitalism and bourgeois democracy in Western Europe follow a definite path of development, and cannot conceive that this path can be taken as a model only *mutatis mutandis*, only with certain amendments (quite insignificant from the standpoint of the general development of world history).

First – the revolution connected *with the first imperialist world war*. Such a revolution was bound to reveal new features ...

Secondly – they are complete strangers to the idea that while the development of world history as a whole follows general laws it is by no means precluded, but, on the contrary, presumed, that certain periods of development may display peculiarities in either the form or the sequence of this development ...

Infinitely stereotyped, for instance, is the argument they learned by rote during the development of West-European Social Democracy, namely, that ... the objective economic premises for socialism do not exist in our country. Does it not occur to any of them to ask: what about the people that found itself in a *revolutionary situation* such as that created during

47 Lenin 1966h, p. 476.

the first imperialist war? Might it not, influenced by the *hopelessness* of its situation, fling itself into a struggle that would offer it *at least some chance of securing conditions for the further development of civilization* that were somewhat unusual.

... But what if the situation, which drew Russia into the imperialist world war ... place her development on the border of the revolutions maturing or partly already begun in the East, gave rise to circumstances that put Russia and her development in a position which enabled us to achieve precisely that *combination of a 'peasant war' with the working-class movement?* ...

What if the *complete hopelessness of the situation*, by *STIMULATING* the efforts of the workers and peasants *TENFOLD*, offered us the opportunity to create the fundamental requisites of civilization *in a* different way from that of the West European countries? Has that altered the general line of development of world history? ...

If a definite level of culture is required for the building of socialism (although nobody can say just what that definite 'level of culture' is, for it differs in every Western European country), why can we not we begin by first achieving the prerequisites for that definite level of culture in a revolutionary way, and then, on the basis of the worker and peasant power and the Soviet system, proceed to overtake the other nations [Bukharin's emphases in this piece].⁴⁸

This unusually bold outline with its grandiose sweep of an extraordinarily broad idea is a remarkable application of revolutionary dialectics. We must immerse ourselves as deeply as possible in the problem of the *uniqueness* of our revolution, which is the only thing that can serve as the basis of a correct and successful policy.

In fact, the usual view of the socialist revolution is as follows: the material precondition for socialism is large industry, a large working class; if these do not exist, then the proletarian revolution is bound to fail, a miscarriage of revolution takes place. How did Lenin address this question? He said: *by and large* this is correct. But under special conditions, this *correct* statement can become an *incorrect* one. We must *see* what these special conditions are. These conditions are, for example, that here in Russia a world war, state rule by landowner, the muzhik in servitude, ferment among the workers of Western Europe, colonial uprisings in the East, etc., are creating a special situation,

48 Lenin 1966h, pp. 477–9.

despite the backwardness of this Russia, a situation that shows that the *general* state of affairs, if it is applied in toto to the concrete instance, is becoming *incorrect*. This is the crux. We believe that this note by Vladimir Il'ich is to a certain degree the key to understanding his entire position.

The general rule is correct, says comrade Lenin. But those who do not understand that you cannot live by one general rule are fools. Be so good as to examine this particular case, when, thanks to the special situation of war and revolution in the West and incipient revolution in the East, etc., the working class and the peasantry got the opportunity to chase out the landowners, to chase out the capitalists, to take over the factories and plants, and to move forward on the basis of new principles, encompassed in a *special* atmosphere which had never existed before (a crisis of capitalism, etc.). Lenin opened fire on the customary, very deeply rooted ideas about revolution, about the possibilities of victory for the proletariat, and so on. And he introduced a very significant corrective to this vulgar, current, book-learned conception: did you learn from these little books, he asked, that there are no possible exceptions? Needless to say, putting the question like that does not contradict Marxism in the slightest. On the contrary it is an unusually subtle application of Marxist theory, of Marxist revolutionary dialectics. For here is the *uniqueness* of the features of the revolution, perhaps the imitable features which distinguish our revolution. And comrade Trotsky's view? Trotsky of course does not have a clue about this. He sees the matter in very simple terms, as 'everybody' sees it, as it is written about in the Social-Democratic pamphlets, *as it is usually interpreted*. A small proletariat, a small industry. The proletariat came to power and will inevitably perish. But comrade Lenin says: no, it is by no means inevitable because perhaps the situation in the country is *such*, and the conditions around the country are *such*, that this is *by no means inevitable*.

This is the source of the difference in prognosis, the difference in perspective, of the disagreements on a whole series of individual questions of practical politics. This is the source of Vladimir Il'ich's general 'plan' – don't cut yourself off from the muzhik base, and gradually develop industry. Remember that the accumulation of kopecks in the peasant economy is the basis for the accumulation of rubles in the socialist industry. In all of our economic and other policies, link arms with the muzhik. Remake [*peredelyvai*] him through co-operation, drag him towards association in the co-operative. You have banks and credit. Over decades, remake him, refashion him, without being embarrassed that he is a proprietor. Remember that he must be an ally which you must refashion. Have patience, do not hurry, do not dig your heels in, do not reveal your communist virtues, hide them sometimes in your pocket if they make him nervous, be careful, and wisely lead him along behind you – only then will you succeed.

And ask comrade Trotsky if he has any notion of the co-operative movement, which Lenin raised in his recent articles, in which he wrote about his attitude to it? Don't his arguments about inevitable ruin contradict the Leninist plan?

But now some observations on the *assistance of the West-European proletariat*. And here is how Trotsky thinks in this regard. In comrade Trotsky's view, the West-European proletariat provides *state* support: it gains power, and *in this way* helps us get out of the perilous, muzhik morass. But the proletariat did *not* win here. But surely it helps us? And surely there is still another force which can help us, the force of the colonial peoples? What is comrade Trotsky's mistake here? It is in his formally logical approach to the matter. He does not see the uniqueness of forms, the special 'period', and this stops comrade Trotsky from putting the question in his typical way. For Trotsky, there is *either* the victory of the West-European proletariat *or* our failure; *either* state help, *or* nothing. And in real life? Real life has a series of *half-victories*, plus a colonial movement, plus a crisis of capitalism caused by war. Life there turned out to be more variegated and more colourful. And here is this *unique*, international situation and *unique form of international, proletarian support*, a form which does not fit into the snug coffin of Trotsky's logical schemes – this is all taken into account by Leninism, that most flexible, perceptive instrument of our age.

If the CC had adopted comrade Trotsky's position on the question of the peasantry, we would have ended up with the 'ruin of the country'. Such a CC would truly have ruined our revolution, if under the guise of a purely 'proletarian' ideology and a purely 'proletarian' policy, it had indeed pursued a semi-Menshevik, workshop [*tsekhovoi*] policy: and such a policy would have inevitably pushed us towards the abyss – we would have lost a connection with the peasantry and impaled ourselves on the conflict which would have become a fatal one. That is why it is now necessary to take a completely unequivocal political position. All personal sympathies and antipathies must be put aside.

Comrade Trotsky has again come out with a system of views which comprises the *essence* of Trotskyism; but our party can in no way adopt this viewpoint, which it has tirelessly struggled against for many, many years. We are not indifferent to the theory of permanent revolution. If this banner is hoisted again, we must fight, for our party will only achieve our cause if it is united around a defined, ideological political axis. But if dynamite has been laid beneath this axis, beneath this foundation – and this is being done – then the party can have no part of this. Our revolution is not over. We have not achieved our cause yet. We have no intention of retiring, but sooner or later we will have to let the next generation decide the fate of the revolution. In the party we must preserve and strengthen Bolshevik, ideological continuity. Our party will still exist in ten years. The history of our party by no means began in October 1917,

and it did not end in October 1917. Our party will live on for decades. Should the party care about its ideological continuity, should we instill the Leninist spirit in all those students and communist youth members? Or should we say: 'those are all old quarrels, let's send them to our great grandmother. We have other problems, those quarrels have nothing to do with the cause'. That must never be our answer. For these '*old*' quarrels are most directly linked to *new* problems. We therefore consider it our duty to the party to be a barrier against attempts to revise and make little corrections to Leninist teachings, to fix them up in the manner of the 'permanent revolution'. 'Every cloud has a silver lining': by discussing these questions, by considering all the arguments thoroughly, by elaborating our party history, and by linking our party's past history to the current issues in political life – we can make sure that we are bolshevising our party.

‘To All the Members of the Central Committee Who are Enemies of Trotskyism’ (1924)¹

N. Bukharin

Dear Comrades,

Given the fact that several conflicts have occurred among the members of the party (between me and a number of leading comrades), which in my view have been accompanied by formal violations of Leninist discipline by these comrades; and given the fact, on the other hand, that these disagreements and conflicts, which come from a different understanding of our tasks within the party, have put me in an impossible position (as I cannot take responsibility for a policy which I consider to be disastrous for the party) and which – more importantly – can objectively damage our cause, I am compelled to make this statement to you, expressing my point of view on the permanent crisis both at the top of the party and in the party as a whole.

1 Lenin’s Plan

Our party and its leading centre must not lose sight of the plan proposed by Lenin in his final articles and in his so-called ‘Testament’, read out during our last [Thirteenth Party] congress. We must not forget that Vladimir Il’ich was most concerned about the possibility of a confrontation between the classes and a split inside the party, inside our Central Committee. Comrade Lenin clearly saw the danger of a split: at the time, for some of us (probably for all

1 ‘Une lettre de Boukharine aux membres du comité central du parti communiste de l’URSS sur l’attitude à adopter à regard de Trotsky (1924)’, *Les cahiers du mouvement ouvrier* 24 (September/October 2004), pp. 51–64. This confidential letter from Bukharin to the CC of the CPSU discussed how Trotsky should be treated in the light of his recent disagreements with the party. Marc Goloviznine discovered this undated document in the personnel file of the Bolshevik Mikhail Tomskey in the Russian State Archive of Social Political History (RGASPI, fond 593). It dates it to within a year of Lenin’s death. He points out that it was not intended for broad dissemination but was sent by Bukharin to Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin. It was used by Aleksei Rykov in the show-trial of the ‘Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rightists and Trotskyites’ in March 1938 to tar Bukharin with the brush of Trotskyism (ibid, pp. 52–3).

of us) the very word seemed both strange and unjustified. It is precisely for this reason that some comrades considered not publishing Vladimir Il'ich's articles. It seemed strange even to articulate the problem, as the chance of a split in the party or even of the departure of some comrades seemed too incredible.

And so? During the discussion in the party, this possibility was discussed at many meetings, and our leading organs now considered this prospect to be not only possible but probable; moreover, at the present moment this prospect is determining the entire internal policy of the party.

And yet comrade Lenin believed that this prospect was harmful, was the prime threat, even a mortal danger to our party. His main concern, above all others, was to avert this threat. All the critical ideas he developed at the end of his life follow this line: the thorough analysis of class relations in the country, the question of our party, the analysis even of the personal relations among the members of the Politburo and of their personal traits; the plan of co-operative work, the plan of the Worker and Peasant Inspectorate and the Central Control Commission, the measures in the unpublished testament, etc., all this was dictated by a *single concern: to avoid a split, because a split would mean the ruin of our party and the ruin of the country.*

Can we 'Leninists' ignore this point? Can we simply ignore this question which so tormented Lenin, without attempting even a little serious analysis?

Let's take a look. Several comrades had the impression that comrade Lenin 'added something' on the question of Georgia. Completely ludicrous 'explanations' could even be heard about Lenin's interest in and his solicitude of the Georgian affair. It was fashionable to say that Lenin, cut off from reality, was making a mountain out of a molehill. So what? Has not the thunderclap of the Georgian insurrection not proven to us that *Lenin was right*? One must have the courage to admit one's errors. Lenin was right, and his pupils, the Leninists, were wrong. Since Lenin could see further than they could, he could see what was going to happen in many years, what we were unable to see, what we saw only after the coup [*coup*]. It would be unwise to ignore this *fact* and to learn nothing from it.

Now we are beginning to broach the second fundamental and *crucial* problem that Lenin warned us about when he *alerted* the party directly and demanded the greatest vigilance. We are coming to the problem of the *unity of the party.*

Why did Lenin fear a split in the Central Committee? Because he saw what a split inside the party meant. Why did he fear a split inside the party? Because he saw that a split inside the party would *inevitably*, by the objective logic of the struggle and of the social groups, exacerbate the relations between the workers and the peasants, and divide the worker-peasant bloc. Lenin believed

that a schism might possibly start *at the top*. Lenin could see the fracture *line* (Stalin-Trotsky or a majority of the Trotskyists in the Central Committee). Lenin carefully analysed all these relationships and he consciously devised a plan to *surround* all the members of the Politburo with a solid wall of workers, the task of which was essentially to prevent a split. Note well: to prevent a split along the Stalin-Trotsky axis.

If *at the time* this seemed incredible, *now* every impartial member of the party will say: we are taking great strides towards a split. And I will add (and I will prove it later): Trotsky, with his completely false and deeply harmful political line, is not the only guilty party; the majority of the Central Committee, which has all the power and all the instruments of supervision of the party, is equally guilty. For we Leninists, who represent a general, just, and irreproachable political line, are adopting an absolutely *anti-Leninist* position on *this* question.

The discussion started by Trotsky and consciously poisoned and inflamed by a majority of the Central Committee is one more step *against Lenin's plan*. We are perhaps on the eve of a split in the Politburo; and therefore we are facing the prospect of a split in the party. And this precisely at the moment when again, although in a different, novel form, relations between the working class and the peasantry have deteriorated gravely, when in the cities the discontent of the petty-bourgeois strata, the specialists, and intellectuals is growing.

In other words: the elements of the crisis, which Lenin spoke about, are in place. And I am deeply convinced that whoever ignores Lenin's plan, whoever dares take a risk when there is no need to take any risk, that person will objectively deliver an irreparable blow to the party.

2 The Leninists' Objections to Lenin's Plan

The objections that have been made and are still being made to Lenin's plan can be divided into three groups:

- 1) disagreements with Lenin over his evaluation of the situation and his estimation of the leading comrades, the members of the Central Committee;
- 2) assertions that comrade Lenin's position is a petit-bourgeois position;
- 3) arguments that comrade Lenin came up with his entire plan *before* the discussion inside the party last year, and so *for this reason* it must be rejected.

Let's examine these arguments one by one:

The first: some comrades believe that his evaluation of the situation, and especially his estimation of the personnel, was carried out under the passing influence of irritation, illness, and personal conflicts. This is how, among other

factors, Lenin's 'Georgian' letters have been explained. It is clear though that in Lenin's final letters, notably his 'Testament', he is weighing every word. It would be hard to find in history a more objective, more impartial document. Lenin rejected everything that was personal, put aside his sympathies and antipathies, and spoke the *truth*. He said it not for love of truth itself, but for a whole range of practical reasons, to guarantee the future of the party. It is literally a condensation of his observations on the work of his closest collaborators and disciples.

Why does Lenin in his Testament put forward the slogan: Coexist with Trotsky? Because he believed that Trotsky's position was correct? Who could think such an idiotic thought? Absolutely not. He did it because he saw everything in the party from the centre to its edges; he was able to see all the threads leading from the party to the non-party workers, to the peasants, to the intelligentsia, to the constituent parts of society. That is the essential difference: Lenin was much *less optimistic* than his closest disciples. Our comrades are intoxicated by victory. It is said, and it has often been said to me: you are afraid of winning, afraid of taking your victory to its conclusion.

But if one speaks like that, it is only because one appreciates the party *differently* than Lenin appreciated it, and appreciates oneself differently than he did. This truth must be told. We do not see all of our faults, all of the ills of the party. Our main quality is *smugness*. We greatly overestimate our forces that develop at the top of the apparatus and are disconnected from the base of the party. And yet isn't this self-satisfaction the real danger? It must be understood that, inasmuch as we are the dominant party, and moreover the only legal party, this party *cannot be* as homogeneous as it was before we took power; hence the slogan 'coexist'. In other words, the *basis* of our existence as the dominant party in a petty-bourgeois country forces us to 'coexist' with elements with which, in a *different* historical era, we would not have had to coexist at all. This is the *root* of Lenin's completely original attitude vis-à-vis all the 'oppositions': he has coddled them to the extreme (remember the 'leftists' at Brest-Litovsk, the Workers' Opposition, the trade unions, *even* the letter to [G.I.] Miasnikov,² etc.). Lenin acted as a great director who understands perfectly the particularities of the present period, knows how to fight to win people over, fears losing them, knows how not to exacerbate the differences, knows how to draw on independent spirits, never puts a Wall of China between himself and the opposition. And all that with the greatest *firminess* in implementing the *line*

2 A reference to Lenin's letter of 5 August 1921, in which Lenin was perceived as displaying an overly lenient attitude to Miasnikov, the leader of the Workers' Opposition (Lenin 19650, pp. 504–9).

(and without snide digs). Can't we do something similar? Isn't the correctness of Lenin's tactics astonishing; he who was a master and knew how to 'coexist' in the party in order get a grip on *the bloc of classes*?

The *second argument* (which states that to defend Lenin's position is a petit-bourgeois position – this is comrade Zinoviev's main argument) collapses, it seems to me, under its own weight.

The *third argument* is more serious. According to this argument, we should have cut to the chase immediately after the Party Conference last year; Lenin's plan is not applicable *because* it was worked out *before* the discussion in the party, before comrade Trotsky's *New Course*, etc.³ Comrade Zinoviev has more than once openly recognised that by doing this we would be going *against* Lenin's Testament, but that Lenin 'did not foresee' the discussion in the party, etc. Now, it will be said and is being said that Lenin 'did not foresee' Trotsky's introduction to 1917, etc.

This argument, I repeat, is more serious because it attacks Lenin's plan on the basis of changes that effectively took place in the party and of which he knew nothing. But let us ask ourselves: do these changes justify repudiating Lenin's plan?

In my opinion, no. It is just a ridiculous idea.

In effect Lenin worked out his plan on the basis of many years of experience. With the hand of the master, he painted a picture in broad strokes. He started with the *outlines*, and then added the details. Was he ignorant of Trotskyism? Did he not see through Trotsky to the core, in all its particulars? Did he not understand all the objectively harmful traits of this political figure? I repeat, such assumptions are ridiculous. Lenin did not work out his analysis and come up with his plan in a few weeks or on the basis of this or that discussion. He was thinking on a completely different scale and was able to do this because he saw farther and more deeply than others. How can Lenin's plan be rejected because a discussion has taken place? This is a ridiculous notion which contributes nothing to the good health of the party.

And so: against the *third argument* by the opponents of Lenin's plan, suffice it to say that they did not grasp the *depth* of this plan, its richness, its enormous significance, that remarkable way of articulating the problems which allows Lenin to bring together in a single whole the problem of the classes, of the party, of its Central Committee, of the relations among the individuals.

And yet – comes the retort – you should stop acting in an organised way in the life of the party, the Leninists and anti-Trotskyists should dissolve into the

3 Trotsky 1965a.

masses. Not at all! There is, as Lenin used to say, a 'limit'. The counter-attack against Trotsky, the struggle against his errors should be conducted in an organised way, *precisely because* Lenin is no longer here now. But it is a long way from that to sharpening the relations consciously and setting course for a split, in a direct contradiction of Lenin's injunction to 'coexist'. To hide *that* 'limit', to erase *it*, can be justified in the service of a polemical goal, but is impermissible from the viewpoint of a conscientious analysis of existing relations and of research into practical, indispensable, political solutions.

3 Two Ways to Fight the Trotskyist Deviation

The 'Trotskyism' of Trotsky is, of course, not limited to Trotsky. It is quite correct that Trotsky represents a 'foreign body' among the real Bolsheviks of Leninist persuasion. His rationalistic political methodology, which is at its core a literary mode pushed to the extreme, is combined with an even more extreme *arrogance*. Trotsky's systematic 'failures' are not only no accident, but on the contrary are deeply intertwined with the very principles of his particular ideology.

Comrade Lenin said quite rightly, speaking of the 'law' of Trotsky's evolution, that it was good in a time of revolutionary upsurge but inevitably stumbled when the revolution entered a calmer period, or when it encountered obstacles.

Clearly, for our party it is precisely in that situation that the difficulties are the greatest. That is why Trotsky's opposition is especially harmful. It becomes really dangerous whenever Trotsky persists in fighting for anti-Leninist tactical and organisational principles while draping himself in the cloak of Leninism, and whenever he tries systematically to undermine the direction of our party and to discredit its leadership, namely the best and most experienced people in the party and who will remain so in the long term.

Finally, he becomes even more dangerous because of the tendency for all the malcontents, both inside the party and at its edges, to group around Trotsky. This aspect deserves special attention, and I think that Lenin had this in mind when he called for extreme caution on this point. The historical paradox could quite possibly occur, for example, that Trotsky, who ignored the peasantry and was not able to conceive of its role, might become the object of expression for its discontent, and that the muzhik, in the ranks of the army, would see him as their leader.

The military intelligentsia, the petty bourgeoisie in the cities, and especially the intellectual youth in need, and sometimes the workers hit by employment cuts, etc., all these people tend to rally around 'persecuted' 'heroes of the

revolution'. Already last year the opposition showed itself to be heterogeneous but united around Trotsky on a *negative* platform: everyone against the Central Committee. The White press abroad benefited from this split, taking Trotsky under its protection.

And so a great masquerade begins: if Lenin was the embodiment of wisdom in the official court of the party, then Trotsky, who had been regarded in the past as one of Satan's henchmen and as the leader of the terrorist wing of our party, acquires the face of a great reformer and a protector of the victims of a party deprived of its leader. And so the opposition *in the country*, the opposition against the regime of the proletarian dictatorship, expresses itself through opposition and objectively through Trotsky – whether he wants it or not.

History itself therefore deciphers Lenin's analysis and completely confirms his formulation.

The slogan 'coexist', and the political line that comes from it, in no way lead to a political morass, to any kind of passivity or *real* petty-bourgeois mediocrity. To formulate these questions as 'either-or' questions (either do not struggle against Trotsky or set ourselves up for a split) is primitive thinking and not seeing the 'limits' and the transitions. However, in all the many discussions and debates on this subject, those comrades who opposed Lenin's plan (namely a large majority of our leading group) have invariably *falsely represented* (and this continues) the case I am making for a certain kind of struggle as *a rejection of that struggle*. I repeat it here: it is perhaps useful for the strategic goals of our internal polemic but it is very harmful to any serious analysis and research of the correct path.

However, it is quite clear that two paths lie before us:

– either *we conduct the struggle against Trotsky* while setting ourselves up for a split;

– or *we conduct the struggle against Trotsky* while endeavouring to 'coexist'.

The debate is *there*, and *there alone*.

It seems very odd to me to think that Lenin would not have taken account of the possible deviations, present and future, of Trotsky. Has he not been characterised more than once as 'an extremely powerful machine which however is not heading in the right direction'? *That is why* he warned us of *this* danger: he understood perfectly that in any case 'his' disciplines would not see this. He warned us against *excess and smugness*. That is what his warnings meant. But that also predetermined the *form of struggle* against Trotsky and his deviations. The majority of our corps of leaders is coming out against this 'Leninism in the full sense of the term on the question of organisation'.

And so the discussion is whether we should disarm Trotsky and his support-

ers by ideological means while endeavouring at the same time to 'coexist', or whether we should set ourselves up for a split while thinking that in that way we will pluck from the foot of our party organism the painful thorn which regularly plunges it into fits of fever.

If we choose the *first* path, then, the centre of gravity of the struggle moves in the direction of a serious and thorough Leninist propaganda campaign and a serious, systematic, long-term effort to denounce the falseness of Trotskyist positions.

At the same time, the party responds to every political attack from Trotsky with a counter-attack. Through this combination of methods, Trotsky's influence as a leader is undermined if the latter claims this role and maintains his position.

If we choose the *second* path, we should use all means to *provoke* Trotsky, to push him to intervene, to stop at nothing (including snide digs, not electing him to the Presidium, not publishing his articles, removing him from ceremonies, prohibiting him from lecturing on this or that subject, etc.); to make use of these interventions in an organised way, namely by passing resolutions in every instance from the highest bodies of the party and by making these resolutions the point of departure for new attacks; to provoke him repeatedly and to 'retrench' repeatedly to the point that daily life becomes physically unbearable. So the question is posed 'in all its complexity', and the hard line culminates in a split (be it under the guise of the expulsion of the opposition, which of course does not change much of substance).

It is not difficult to understand why our leaders chose the *second* path. Not only the measures taken at the Thirteenth Congress, but the whole gist of the struggle against Trotsky is thus organised as a political line opposed to Lenin's plan, and even the Central Control Commission, reformed 'according to Il'ich', becomes an essential weapon in the struggle not only against Trotsky but against Lenin's plan.

4 **Why was Lenin Correct against his Followers, and Why is the First Path More Just Than the Second?**

To all of the above, the following objection might be raised: why do you say that a split would be fatal to the party? How can the chances be evaluated without speaking about the opponent? And whether it is *he* who is provoking it? Can you state that there will be no split, that it is *impossible*?

This 'objection' is based however on a poor understanding of the question it poses. Of course, in theory the possibility of a split cannot be discounted; nor

can the possibility of a split between the classes, nor even the possibility of the collapse of Soviet power and of our party.

However, *the question is this: on what side of the balance do we throw the weight of our organisational line*, i.e. what are we *ourselves* looking for?

I maintain that, given the colossal apparatus at our disposal (men, press, centres of organisation, etc.), we are the *decisive factor*. The solution is in *our* hands, not in those of the enemy which is growing weaker by the day, even if this process is not as quick as we would wish.

Let's even suppose for example that Trotsky, *regardless of our position*, fights more and more stubbornly (something which I personally consider to be hardly likely if we assume that he is really implementing Lenin's plan). Let us concede this and see what would happen.

It is essential to always start from the fact that it is not the person of Trotsky that interests us, but the groupings inside or outside the party with which he is linked. Above all *inside the party*, because without them he has no ties to wider circles: if this little bridge collapses, he plunges into the water.

And so, what will happen?

We must depict the party as it is, with all its stages and with all its nuances. Here we see the basic structure of the party, the entire Central Committee, its thousand-armed organ, marching in lock step with it; among these comrades, in the pores of this party apparatus but also outside of it, there are a certain number of opponents; only a small number of these are out-and-out Trotskyists; the overwhelming majority are not Trotskyists but form a bloc with Trotsky; some of them are ethical Bolsheviks who are unable to tolerate the 'offenses' against Trotsky, who see his talent but underestimate the harmful effect of this talent; next comes a stratum of conscious party members; a significant majority of these, while being completely behind the Central Committee, at the same time 'respect' Trotsky and appreciate the service he has given; they would applaud him while *voting* against him. Finally comes the great 'grey' mass of the remaining party members, who do not understand much, who do not understand a discussion which for them has no justification (an important percentage of the 'Lenin Levy' make up this group). *This stratum on the whole is in tune with a 'just egalitarianism' or with an 'egalitarian justice'.*

What should we do to win over the maximum number of party members to our positions, to isolate the generals in their army, so that – if these generals stake their all – the worst case scenario would be the departure of a group and not a split?

Given the actual structure of our party, there is no doubt that the repeated frontal attacks, and the methods devolving from the choice of the 'second path',

make it *impossible* to win over a very important stratum of the party that 'intellectually' does not understand the question and 'emotionally' 'sympathises' with Trotsky. This is why this second path is not suitable; it distances a certain number of comrades from the policy of the Central Committee, it vainly irritates them, and pushes them into the camp of the opposition.

To charge that this line of argument is an alignment with the petty-bourgeois tendency in the party and not with the worker vanguard of the [Petr] Zalutskii kind (as Zinoviev does) really means that the ABCs of Leninist tactics are being accused of philistinism. Because it is impossible to lead the masses without making a *bond* with them and without taking account of *their level*. That is why it is impossible to lead the masses *of the party* without taking their actual state of mind into account.

Here we are broaching the basic question from another angle, by asking ourselves: is the tactic of the *forced offensive* useful, or is it necessary to set our sights on a *calmer, less convulsive rhythm of development in the party*?

This leads to a string of questions I asked the opponents of Lenin's plan:

1) Is the time right for us? The reply was: 'Yes'.

2) Is the tactic we have adopted linked to the probability of a split? The reply was: 'Yes, a split is probable'.

3) Does a split entail a risk for the party and the country? The reply was: 'Yes'.

I therefore posed the following question:

'Do we have the right to risk everything if the time is right for us, as you acknowledge?'

To this question, I have received *no* reply.

What wisdom radiates from Lenin's plan and what arrogance from the actual 'plan' of his opponents on the organisational questions!

5 **The Crisis of the Worker-Peasant Bloc and the Situation in the Party, or Why the Anti-Leninist Plan is Especially Nefarious Today**

The entire experience of the history of the party tells us that internal crises are dangerous when they develop as a consequence of or as a complement to a crisis *in the country*. The crisis of Brest-Litovsk was dangerous because of the crisis in the country, a crisis it both emerged from and expressed; the trade union crisis was dangerous because the crisis was linked to the passage of the NEP (Kronstadt, Tambov); last year's discussion was linked to the economic crisis in the autumn. If we soon foster a new internal crisis (i.e. if we *ourselves* contribute to its creation), once again a large social base is ready for it: for we would have to deal with the *crisis of the worker-peasant bloc*. It is futile to

'demonstrate' or 'illustrate' it. This question occupied a central place at the last meeting of the Central Committee. The entire importance and meaning of *this* crisis, novel as much for its substance as for its form, has been recognised by everybody. Alas however, when the strategic and tactical plans of our internal policy are drawn up, this basic, decisive circumstance is *forgotten* completely! In this sense, the discussion of Trotsky's article at a meeting attended by many members of the Central Committee was typical. Nobody said *a single* word about the prospects *as part of* a class analysis! This problem was approached superficially and 'while it was still current', at a time when our entire future depended on the decision taken.

The following argument is often heard: *'What are you afraid of? Since the Central Committee is conducting a sound general policy and in particular a sound economic policy – and you acknowledge that this policy is just – this is a guarantee of its success. It is necessary to fight for this sound political line, and everything else will take care of itself'*.

Is this argument right? No, it is not. Because the party can have a sound general policy and a crisis can still erupt in the country. In his Testament, comrade Lenin pointed out precisely that in the conditions we find ourselves in even the details of the daily lives of the leading comrades would start to be freighted with political meaning. That is *a fortiori* true of the questions of our internal politics. Combined with objective discontent that exists in a whole range of social groups (and which is and will be inevitable even with a sound policy), *these* errors, we say again, can trigger a crisis in the country.

The new features of the current crisis in the worker-peasant bloc are that, for the first time since the revolution, the immediate interests of two classes, the working class and the peasantry – and basically of those alone – are clearly in opposition. Given the disposition of the main class forces, it is understandable that the contradictions which are developing in the towns are inevitably going to, so to speak, 'combine' with this fundamental contradiction: this concerns the crisis of overproduction of the new intelligentsia, combined with the exacerbation of the relations between the proletariat and the former intelligentsia; this concerns the crisis of overproduction of the labour force which has been driven out of the countryside and established in the city, etc.

This is why our politics demands extreme sensitivity and the greatest prudence.

The party knew how to recognise the enormous danger of the situation, and adopted with unusual unanimity measures to fight this danger. Among these measures, we have all together taken measures to 'reinforce Soviet democracy' (reviving the Soviets, collaborating with non-members of the party, struggling against the arbitrary, emphasising persuasion by argument rather than by

force). But how, we are asked, does this line fit in with the internal politics of the party?

I think that is completely inconsequential. *It is impossible* to proclaim a 'liberal course' (don't pick a fight with me for using this phrase, it is the time-honoured expression) vis-à-vis the village soviets, and at the same time to turn up the pressure in the party to the maximum. That, however, is exactly what we are doing today.

One might object: but it is precisely to have a more democratic course in the Soviets that it is necessary to have the greatest unity, ideological and otherwise, in the party. *That is precisely why* we are going after [*chasser*], or getting ready to go after, the Trotskyists.

This argument would be valid if our party were not the way it is; *if* we were not pursuing a policy of expanding the party; *if* we did not have several hundred thousand workers from the Lenin Levy who have not yet simmered enough in the Bolshevik cauldron, *then* we would be able to pose the question in those terms. But given the actual composition of the party, we should do everything possible to persuade on the basis of the internal democracy of the party. If, in these actual conditions, we set our sights on a split and do not undertake the prior work of winning over these new members of the party, we will be *in open conflict with our general policy and inevitably contribute to the growing difficulties in our country*.

This danger is already evident. The party is truly offering an unprecedented picture. A minority of the party is literally terrorised (and has not digested anything), it swallows everything while grinding its teeth; a not insignificant stratum of new members of the party, completely disorientated, give in when they are forcibly educated with totally incomprehensible explanations; these are extreme manifestations of fanatical desperation. One would have to be irretrievably cut off at the top to ignore the terrorist state of mind inside the party, a phenomenon without precedent in our entire history. I am aware that I can be countered with demonstrations of a quite different state of mind. All the better! But what I have pointed out here is enough to understand the extreme danger to which we are exposing ourselves if we follow the policies of *arrogant* committee men who are deaf to everything that is happening among the militants in the rank-and-file. *Just one* of those letters we receive from distant provinces would have been enough for Lenin to consult his comrades twenty times over, to organise a dozen meetings, to delve as deeply as possible into the organisations at the base of the party. And now we are receiving *hundreds* of letters and alarming notes, and we ignore them as if it is all just a normal thing.

What is that, if not an arrogance fraught with countless disasters?

In a situation of social crisis, these alarming signs in the party become quite simply sinister. We must understand that we are not in Geneva, that within the orbit of our party is the army, with all its qualities. We must remember the history of all the counter-revolutionary coups d'état. We must recognise that a third force will take over if civil war breaks out in our party. We do not have to suffer huge defeats in order to collapse.

It is enough that confusion, trouble, and disarray reign in the ranks of the party, that the members of the party lose confidence in their direction, in their leaders, and that the masses, having lost confidence, will stumble blindly from one to the other, ignorant and suspicious of everything and everyone.

I am not saying at all that this prospect is inevitable in this form. But I am stating that if this prospect has one chance in a hundred of becoming a reality, it is criminal to pursue a policy which increases that chance when this risk *can* be avoided. And so the anti-Leninist plan is especially nefarious today.

6 Regroupings at the Top

There are two *additional* concrete factors which – alas! – weigh heavily on this 'rigorous line': 1) the personal particularities of the leaders of the Central Committee; 2) the pursuit of internal unity through a split with Trotsky. These two factors further complicate an already complex situation.

It is futile to expand upon the first of these factors. We must linger a while on the second factor as it has deep significance for the internal life of the party.

We are perfectly well-aware that serious conflicts have arisen more than once inside the Leninist group. These conflicts of course involve 'personnel issues' which were kept in check in the past by Lenin's will and ideas. But it would be a mistake to believe that this is only about personnel issues, although these unfortunately do play a very important role. But the deeper reason is that different comrades who have different jobs and different experiences are subject to diverse influences. And this is why, on the basis of the heterogeneity of our party, the 'synthesis' at the top inevitably causes pain and conflict. If we did not have a formally united leadership, the dangers of these internal conflicts would be even greater. But I repeat, this danger is at this moment especially grave. Lenin has been dead for barely a year and in the Central Committee the crises are coming thick and fast, and relations have deteriorated not only vis-à-vis Trotsky and the others, but *inside the Leninist core*.

And now one idea is going through the minds of a whole series of comrades: '*reinforce the struggle against Trotsky as a way of reinforcing our internal unity*'. We cling to this lifebuoy every time an internal conflict comes to a head. We

all remember that our last conference took place under the rubric: 'Trotsky is uniting us 100 percent' (comrade Zinoviev).⁴

I do not think this is right. I do not think that there can be 100 percent unity. Ultimately I do not believe that such artificial measures can and should be used to unify the Leninist core, the foundation of the direction of the party without which the latter cannot move forward.

If we persist with and reinforce this internal political line, with all its peculiarities, it will hardly produce an enviable picture: *even* if the minority silently supports everything, in the next crisis it will try to take revenge with fanatical hatred. Furthermore, the crisis at the top will recur with all its force but right inside the Leninist group, and so the most dangerous line will be pursued, that of the *atomisation* of the party's direction. Where is the guarantee against that? Where?

It is in *Il'ich's plan*, which we have rejected. And in it alone. The Trotskyist problem means that we cannot live from day to day. We must see farther, we must educate the party, we must take the organisational steps that would in effect save us from potential splits.

This is why the strategy of a peace acquired at the cost of a bitter internal struggle against Trotsky, namely an all-out war to the death, and setting our sights on a split, is radically wrong (and in its way opportunistic). This is a nasty and artificial elixir, a narcotic which produces artificial excitement but ultimately weakens the organism of the party.

This wretched idea, however, finds its pernicious reflection even in our daily activity. Engels once said scornfully that the French socialists, when they have a problem to solve, proceed not from the viewpoint of internal logic but from the viewpoint of the *faction*. We are not far from this. We incessantly solve problems according to the principle: 'Whatever does not help Trotsky'. But we do not even indicate how exactly we are helping Trotsky and all the other deviations: since we are artificially curbing our own laboratory of ideas.

To our greatest misfortune we are not far from the situation that existed in *the General Staff of the White armies*. We have all read at one time or another the various memoirs of the Whites about the relations at the top in their own Staff. And everybody understood clearly why these gentlemen had to perish.

Our internal relations, however, are beginning to look very much like that: mutual distrust, cynical violation of jointly taken decisions, the selection of people solely to harm Trotsky or to harm each other, the construction of

4 This may not be a direct quotation but rather a distillation of what Zinoviev said to the 13th Party Conference (*Trinadtsataia konferentsiia* 1924, pp. 177–8).

categories, mutual conspiracies, etc. Isn't it time we put an end to all that? Isn't it time to understand that people can get worked up in the struggle against Trotsky but that this struggle will not resolve the deeper problem recognised (yes, recognised!) by Il'ich?

7 The Signs of Decline of the Party

If it persists into the future, the political myopia of the party, which I think is evident today, leads to these extraordinarily dangerous phenomena.

This has appeared above all in the current 'discussion'. How is it being conducted? *Does it really explain* anything? I say that to a great extent it obscures more than it illuminates. That 'certain' comrade, who however does not understand much, exposes what Trotsky has written, and everybody should believe it. Timid remarks about it not being bad to 'read a little' are bitterly rejected; most often, the opposition does not have the floor. Then they vote, but most of the participants feel deep down a real sense of dissatisfaction. Hundreds of notes and letters confirm that sense. And the more they shout loudly 'like in Leningrad', the more the militant centre or the workers' rear is destabilised, and, ignoring the motives for this political orientation, they imagine quite different ones. This completely 'novel' form of discussion, where there is neither discussion nor even any sensible explication, is a sign of *decline*.

Inasmuch as a garish 'Vardinism'⁵ is flourishing at the same time, it is considered à propos to edit massively under the banner of Leninism the most useless pamphlets which it is forbidden to criticise (we are told that this would be 'firing on each other', as if we were in a small circle and not the party in power), and to choose texts without caring at all about their merit.

The first adjutant here is a Voltaire who is provided solely to be a fierce anti-Trotskyist. This is a *dangerous* tendency. For the fundamental tasks of the party cannot be forgotten, the party cannot be educated like ... [*the copy of the document ends here – NDLR*].

5 From the name Vardin, a symbol for Bukharin of a politically vulgar literary sub-genre [Bukharin's footnote].

“The New Discussion”.¹ An Article by Com. A.I. Rykov²

A.I. Rykov

A discussion is once again on the agenda of our party life. And once again this discussion is linked with the name of comrade Trotsky. This discussion has been repeated four times during the post-October period. The first discussion was over the Brest-Litovsk peace, the second over the trade unions, the third over the internal and economic policies of the party (during Lenin's illness), and the fourth discussion is taking place now.

Before October 1917, the party was engaged in a 'permanent' discussion with comrade Trotsky, because until the October Revolution comrade Trotsky belonged to the Menshevik party which was hostile to us.

Each of the post-October discussions has taken place, in ideological terms, on an ever-broadening basis. While the first three discussions were connected with issues of current party policy, and general questions of principle arose in them only in connection with these issues of current policy – today's discussion does not have any direct relationship with any particular aspect of current policy and opens up to party discussion the entire historical development of Bolshevism. The future historian needs to know only one fact – that repeated discussion in the ranks of the party over a number of years was linked to a single name, the name of Trotsky – to determine that comrade Trotsky was a kind of constant source of disagreements over 'principle' inside the party. The discussion surrounding comrade Trotsky's article 'The Lessons of October' differs from all earlier quarrels because it exposes those historical, principled roots of this constant source of intraparty discussion.

The disagreements between the overwhelming majority of the party and comrade Trotsky have their historical roots in the fact that comrade Trotsky developed, nurtured, and defined his own political worldview while he was an active figure in the Menshevik, opportunistic party which was hostile to us. The

1 This article is a reprint of the introductory article, written by comrade Rykov, for the collection *Za Leninizm* [original footnote]. [*Za Leninizm. Sbornik statei* 1925, pp. 3–8].

2 'Novaia diskussiiia. Stat'ia tov. A. I. Rykova', *Pravda*, no. 292, 23 December 1924, p. 5; also published as 'Novaia diskussiiia', *Izvestiia*, no. 293, 28 December 1924, p. 2 [original footnote].

Bolshevik Party strengthened, developed, and defined its ideology in a bitter struggle against populism, Menshevism, and Trotskyism as one of its variants. Many hoped that this ‘difference in origins’ would not stop comrade Trotsky from fully assimilating into the party. And the party exerted all its efforts to that end. Even today, although more rarely than before, complaints can be heard that the upper levels of the party ‘have got it in for comrade Trotsky’. A cursory glance though at the role the party assigned to comrade Trotsky in the area of party leadership, party building, and also in the realm of state work, is enough to show that these accusations have no basis at all. The party brought comrade Trotsky into the Politburo of its Central Committee, brought him into all the top state institutions – Sovnarkom and STO, and conducted military work through him. In all these examples of discussions, the initiative for the discussion always came from comrade Trotsky. Neither the Central Committee, nor any other groups in the party, nor a majority of the party attacked comrade Trotsky, but on the contrary comrade Trotsky attacked the Central Committee and the majority of the party. All of the discussions have been acts of self-defence on the part of the Central Committee and the party which have defended the political line of the party against comrade Trotsky.

The discussion between the party and comrade Trotsky became most tense last autumn during the discussion about internal party democracy and economic policy. Last autumn, the question was raised quite openly about the need for radical changes in the leadership of the party. Evidence of this need was the sharp internal party and economic crises which ‘took the country to the brink of ruin’, as comrade Trotsky said in one document.³ The declaration of the ‘46’ on 15 October 1923 stated that ‘we face the approaching breakdown of the chervonets currency, which has spontaneously been transformed into a basic currency before the liquidation of the budget deficit; a credit crisis in which the State Bank can no longer, without risk of a serious collapse, finance either industry or trade in industrial goods or even the purchase of grain for export’.⁴ In this same document, it further states:

These are some of the elements of the economic, credit and financial crisis which has already begun. If extensive, well-considered, planned and energetic measures are not taken forthwith, if the present (end of last year) absence of leadership continues, we face the possibility of an extremely

3 Although not the source of this exact quotation, Trotsky’s sentiments along these lines were similarly articulated in the following article of 15 October 1923: ‘V Politbiuro TsK RKP’, in *Arkhiv Trotskogo* 1990, pp. 83–5.

4 Cited in Carr 1969, p. 374. For the original, see *Arkhiv Trotskogo* 1990, pp. 83–8.

acute economic breakdown, which will inevitably involve internal political complications and a complete paralysis of our external effectiveness and capacity for action. And this last, as everyone will understand, is more necessary to us now than ever; on it depends the fate of the world revolution and of the working class of all countries.⁵

And at the end of this document by the '46', we find this equation of 'the crisis in the country' with 'the crisis in the party':

Should the position thus created not be radically changed in the immediate future, the economic crisis in Soviet Russia and the crisis of the fractional dictatorship in the party will deal heavy blows at the workers' dictatorship in Russia and the Russian Communist Party. With such a load on its shoulder, the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and its leader the RKP cannot enter the phase of impending new world-wide disturbances except with the prospect of defeats on the whole front of the proletarian struggle.⁶

In his letter of 8 October 1923 to the members of the Central Committee and the Central Control Commission, comrade Trotsky wrote:

Party democracy – at least within those limits, without which ossification and degeneration threaten the party, must come into its own. The rank and file of the party must, in the context of party-mindedness [*partinost'*], say that they are dissatisfied, and must have the real possibility in accordance with the party statutes and, mainly, in keeping with the entire spirit of our party, of creating their own organisational apparatus. There must be a regrouping of the party forces ...⁷ (my emphasis. A.R.).⁸

5 Cited in Carr 1969, p. 375. The phrase in brackets was added by Rykov.

6 Cited in Carr 1969, p. 377.

7 In this striving to bring about a regrouping of the party forces, the Trotskyists last year made a special wager on the youth as the 'barometer' of the party. From the standpoint of the struggle between two platforms, this wager was completely understandable. The youth had not gone through the revolutionary baptism of the party in its struggle against Trotskyism. More than other strata of the party, it was more free of the traditions of Bolshevism and could therefore represent a more or less 'open' field for the struggle between Trotskyism and Leninism. A.R. [original footnote].

8 'Vnutripartiinye diskussii 20-kh godov' 1990, p. 173.

In his pamphlet, *New Course*, also from the end of last year, comrade Trotsky reiterated this hope. He wrote: ‘The ideological and organic regrouping that will come out of the present crisis will, in the long run, have healthful consequences for the rank and file of the communists as well as for the apparatus.’⁹

Now, a year later, the party can judge the correctness of the opposition’s predictions about the collapse of our currency and the crisis in our industry. The party can now already judge on their merits all the objections of the opposition against the policies of the Central Committee of the party – the policies which opened up the peasant market to our industry and made our currency system more resilient. The troubles and difficulties of the current moment are overwhelmingly connected to the attitude towards the peasantry. How these difficulties would have grown if the platform of the opposition had been adopted last year, a platform permeated through and through with a lack of understanding, an underestimation of the significance of the peasant question in the policies of our party and in the development of our economy! The predictions of the opposition turned out to be false, their solutions led nowhere.

After the failure of the quite extraordinary onslaught on the Central Committee and the majority of the party by the opposition in the fall of last year, there would seem to have been no reason at all for a repetition of the onslaught in the autumn of this year. After all, there was no kind of state plan for a scheduled programme of discussions from year to year, from autumn to autumn. Nevertheless, it broke out again for the purpose of ‘ideological and organic regrouping’, because ‘the period prior to October, it is now realized, was only a preparatory period’.¹⁰ It should be noted that the party itself gave some cause for such a formulation of the question. Until the most recent discussion today, the party had never once discussed the question of the Menshevik, opportunistic deviation of comrade Trotsky in the sense of the difference between the ideological principles of his activity and the ideology of the Communist Party. This can only be explained of course by the party’s greatest desire for the lasting assimilation of comrade Trotsky, by the party’s hope that comrade Trotsky would join it in October without the specifically Trotskyist ideological baggage he had accumulated throughout his many years of stubborn struggle against the Bolsheviks.

9 L. Trotskii, *Novyi kurs*, p. 10, publ by *Krasnaia nov’* [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1965a, p. 14].

10 L. Trotskii, *Novyi kurs*, p. 7, publ by *Krasnaia nov’* [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1965a, p. 11].

Was this discussion necessary, or not? Of course it would have been better if it had not happened. But this would have been possible only if the party's hopes had been justified that comrade Trotsky would become a member and take up the most responsible position in it, after having repudiated the Trotskyism of the pre-October period. But the vanquishing of these hopes, which the party had long nurtured and which were the reason the party had maintained such a friendly collaboration with comrade Trotsky, was of course cause enough for a broad discussion among the party's members. As has been adequately shown already, we are presently witnessing comrade Trotsky's strange attempt to impose his past political programme on our party. This attempt comes from a political figure who, until he joined the Communist Party, had never led any kind of mass party organisation. While in the ranks of the Menshevik Party, comrade Trotsky by no means played the kind of role he played with us, and people like Martov, Axelrod and Dan made use of his polemical and literary talents to attack the Bolsheviks while they held onto the leadership of the Menshevik Party. In his recently published correspondence, Martov wrote on 16 May 1912 that Trotsky

had not only fallen into the camp of the 'liquidationist bloc', but had been forced to adopt the most combative attitude to Lenin while there. His disciples, sensing this contradiction, made a fuss about this and demanded from him some kind of position above the factions, and then in general 'anything can happen' in the area of organisational work. Trotsky himself sowed this psychology, preaching a quite empty 'unity' whatever the cost, and equating the irreconcilability of the Albanians who wanted to consume the 'Macedonians', with that of the Macedonians who did not want to be consumed, and spreading the vulgar explanation that the splits and 'factionalism' were due to the deficiencies of the 'leaders'.¹¹

In the period of his semi-independent political activity vis-à-vis the Mensheviks and the Liquidators, comrade Trotsky was never able to organise his own, in any way influential, political organisation. Prior to October 1917, Trotskyism represented not a political trend within the working class but the ideology of one individual – comrade Trotsky. No significant strata of the working class were ever infected by Trotskyism throughout the entire history of the workers' movement up to October 1917. Only comrade Trotsky 'flowed' in the stream of Trotskyism. And it would be necessary to permit a quite extraordinary distor-

11 *Pis'ma* 1924, p. 233.

tion of all kinds of proportions to think that precisely after October 1917, when the Bolshevik Party won its political victory and its influence became international, the party would turn out to be the kind of organisation he could now fill with Trotskyism, which has experienced such defeats through the entire history of the workers' movement. While comrade Trotsky managed to gather around himself small cadres of supporters on current political issues like the trade unions and internal party democracy, he remained totally isolated on this principled question of Bolshevism and Trotskyism, despite the fact that he was working to change the ideology of the entire party by grasping onto an episode during the October Revolution that was very advantageous for him and wretched for the party. How can this be explained? The explanation lies in the fact that it became clearer and clearer to the party that the individual attacks by comrade Trotsky and the Trotskyists on the majority of the party were but individual battles in a general campaign by Trotskyism to remove Bolshevik ideology from the Bolshevik Party (after all, in their view the pre-October period of our party was only a preparatory period for October, in which comrade Trotsky somehow played the decisive role). Comrade Trotsky based his attack against the ideology of Bolshevism on the mistake made by a number of comrades, including me, during the October events. Our mistake was that we did not move quickly enough from the yesterday of the Bolshevik Party to its tomorrow. This mistake could be and had to be corrected, our activity at this time could be and had to be criticised, but it would be completely monstrous to allow the mistake of several Bolsheviks inside the Bolshevik Party to be the reason to turn from Bolshevism to Trotskyism. But comrade Trotsky wants to use our mistake for precisely this purpose. If I and other comrades are taking part in the present polemic against comrade Trotsky, it is by no means in order to gloss over our mistake during October, but rather to preclude the possibility of making it worse by having it used to try to revise the founding principles of Leninism.

‘Not Every Effort is Successful’¹

A. Andreev

The introduction to comrade Trotsky’s ‘The Lessons of October’ was not able to achieve its goal, because the party understood at once that this material was unnecessary and harmful to the party.

I would like to address comrade Trotsky’s piece not by reconstructing the historical truth of the real lessons of October, but by examining the very fact of his act and the significance of this act for the party, for I think that the task of reconstructing the historical truth of October has already been carried out completely enough by other comrades who played a more direct leadership role in the October insurrection. But even for those who took part in the preparation of October, although not in the central leading organ of the party but in the workers’ districts of Petrograd, it is quite clear how far comrade Trotsky has distorted the actual history of the preparation of October by our party in his ‘The Lessons of October’.

What is going on here? Might this routine mistake by comrade Trotsky be seen as a literary-historical slip of the pen, as forgetfulness, or just a mistake? Unfortunately, it becomes clearer and clearer every day to the party that comrade Trotsky’s modest – at first sight, literary – piece is not a literary piece at all, but is political from start to finish, and designed to achieve certain goals. Indeed, why did comrade Trotsky have to tell untruths about the most important stage in the development of our party, which the working class of all countries will learn from, namely: how to make a proletarian revolution? And why did comrade Trotsky in 1924 have to drag in the mistakes of two or more comrades in October, when these comrades had openly acknowledged their mistakes repeatedly before the entire party and the entire Communist International? Why did comrade Trotsky have to do all this?

For no other reason than to continue his struggle against the current Bolshevik leadership of our party after his defeats in the past discussion. But comrade Trotsky does not know the party if he thinks that the leadership will take his ‘The Lessons of October’ at face value. He has obviously miscalculated. The party cadres have already understood this today and have decisively con-

1 A. Andreev, ‘Ne vsiakoe sredstvo dostigaet tseli’, in *Za Leninizm. Sbornik statei* 1925, pp. 241–7.

demned comrade Trotsky's efforts, and tomorrow the whole party will grasp this and will have to come to the same conclusion. And it is already beyond doubt that the party will respond and is responding to comrade Trotsky this time with less passion in its discussion and more indifference, because on the one hand, no matter how disguised this attempt to continue the struggle in the party, it is already quite apparent, and on the other, the party has been primed by all of comrade Trotsky's earlier mistakes, and it is easier for it to grasp this in his new piece – to understand who is strengthening the unity of our party and who is destroying it.

By his too frequent repetition of mistakes, Comrade Trotsky is squandering the authority he built up through the revolution and the party. The same thing is happening with his supporters, of whom there are less and less; this is particularly evident from the current discussion of 'The Lessons of October' in the party organisations. If in the past some have been attracted by the seeming gracefulness of comrade Trotsky's ideas on individual issues, today comrade Trotsky's supporters are beginning to understand more and more their true cost and discover the correct Bolshevik party line, they are becoming more and more convinced that comrade Trotsky's alacrity of phrase and gracefulness of ideas all too often do not coincide with the actual tasks of our party, that often behind the forms and schematic edifices of comrade Trotsky's ideas there is no serious and much-needed consideration of the constellation of forces and classes in our revolution, as was the case on the issue of Brest, the trade unions, before the XII Congress, in the discussion on the tasks of the party last year, and so on. 'The Lessons of October' make this even clearer and unite the party against any attempts to foist the unnecessary and the alien onto Bolshevism. This is why, as never before, everything that is Bolshevik and Leninist dissociates itself from Trotskyism in this discussion. In fact, this is quite evident if we even take a quick look at the behaviour of the former opposition from the last party discussion, which was mostly popular among the young. It is a completely different picture now: the overwhelming majority is distancing itself from comrade Trotsky's pronouncements and condemning him. Of course, there are still those who are timid, who are afraid of recognising comrade Trotsky's incorrect positions and adopting the decisive and clear party line; these ditherers are an insignificant minority, but they too, perhaps even if they are the last, will have to take the correct party position – for Leninism, against Trotskyism!

Of course, in our party there are also philistines, people of weak character, who say: 'Should the party raise such a fuss over a little article in a thick book?' This attitude must be steadfastly rejected. First of all because, as everyone is well aware, comrade Trotsky's article is very far from just literature, and

therefore the party cannot simply ignore it. Cowardice and glossing over contradictions is not the tactic of the Bolshevik Party. For our party's entire history, comrade Lenin has taught us the opposite, namely to fight implacably against any kind of false tendencies, and not to gloss over them inside the party – and this was correct. There were no difficult moments in the life of the party when Lenin permitted or glossed over disagreements or deviations within the party, and only through this did our party become strong. A clear and well-defined line and strong discipline, cohesion – this was the basis of the party's power, this is what brought the party success in the past and continues to bring it success today. Smoothing over contradictions and being afraid to expose and condemn false deviations will only weaken the power of the Bolshevik Party and will bring our party the same fate as the Second International, i.e. collapse. This is why, if individual elements in the party are dithering, the broadest possible explanatory work must be undertaken about the entire significance of comrade Trotsky's actions.

Our party, and the Comintern even more, are faced with an enormous task of educating the maturing cadres of the party and our youth for the struggles and work ahead, and this education will mainly be provided and is being provided by the earlier lessons in the life of our party. This is why the leadership of the party is demanding careful evaluation of the quality of the material which is being provided to the masses of the party and to the young, and which, depending on the authority of the provider, is often taken on faith. And if comrade Trotsky gives an incorrect explanation of the main stage in the development of our party, a stage which after the Paris Commune is the kind of practical lesson from which the Communist Parties of other countries will learn for a long time, then it goes without saying that the party cannot fail to correct comrade Trotsky.

But it is not just about correcting the historical falsehoods of comrade Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October', but also about the party not quietly ignoring a new attempt, if in a different form than last time, to continue the struggle inside the party, and to attempt to draw the party once more into a new discussion. It is inconceivable that comrade Trotsky thought his introduction would go unnoticed. It would be pure naivety to think such a thing. Evidently, when comrade Trotsky wrote it, he knew very well what would happen when the now famous 'The Lessons of October' was published. The author of 'The Lessons of October' could not fail to see perfectly that this would renew the struggle and cause a new discussion in the party. Moreover, surely the man who wrote 'The Lessons of October' was well aware of all the other difficulties facing the party? After all, this introduction to a new discussion was not written somewhere far away, outside of the party, far from our internal and external

difficulties, not in some South America or other, but inside our own country which is struggling to rebuild its economy. These are questions the party can justifiably ask comrade Trotsky. When he wrote his introduction, he should have also considered how much he would complicate the struggle of our party with the difficulties inside and outside of the country. He should have been aware of the enormous tasks facing our party vis-à-vis the peasantry, whose activity and needs are growing, and of the tasks in the realm of industry, trade, the fight against the penetration of private capital into our economic turnover, etc.

Comrade Trotsky apparently also forgot the difficulties our country is having with the outside capitalist world where the bitterest enemies of the Soviet Union are returning to power and will be quick to create new perils for us. We can already see how the white bourgeoisie abroad has seized on this new quarrel inside our party, and how new possibilities of the disintegration or weakening of the Soviet state are being mooted. The bourgeoisie wants to insinuate itself into every crack in the edifice of our party, but comrade Trotsky is creating and widening just such a crack. Comrade Trotsky, with his mistakes and his actions against the current leadership in our party, is objectively becoming a magnet for any discontent and petty-bourgeois element, and he must understand this in all clarity.

Comrade Trotsky has forgotten all of this, just as he has forgotten the most important thing that concerned comrade Lenin before his death, and which all the resolutions of the Thirteenth Congress of the party boiled down to: namely the unity of the party, set against all internal and external difficulties.

Apparently, comrade Trotsky felt that the party, leading a country of many millions and fighting against the entire capitalist world and therefore bearing a triple responsibility, could permit itself the luxury of frequent internal party discussions.

Not six months have passed since the Thirteenth Congress, at which the party condemned the error of opposition, and at which comrade Trotsky apparently gave some kind of pledge to submit to the decisions of the party. This is what comrade Trotsky said at the Thirteenth Congress of the party:

Not only the individual member of the party, but even the party itself can make individual mistakes; there were, for example, individual decisions at the last conference which I consider to be in most respects incorrect and unjust; but the party cannot take decisions, even incorrect and unjust ones, which might shake even one iota of our selfless devotion to the cause of the party, or of the readiness of each of us to shoulder the discipline of the party under any conditions. And if the party passes a resolution

which one or another of us considers unjust, then he says: my party, right or wrong, and I will bear the consequences of its resolution to the end.²

Only six months have passed since it became clear from experience that everything that was advanced by the opposition on internal party questions and on economic issues was not justified in one iota and was defeated. Comrade Trotsky, who had spoken so eloquently about devotion to the party and submitting to its discipline, is again disrupting everything as if rules do not exist for him, and with his words he is trying to draw the party into febrile discussion and is stopping it from dealing with the enormous burden of the economic and political tasks. What is going on? Why can't comrade Trotsky, together with the whole party, and in the highest leadership posts, fight all these difficulties? The party does not want discussions. It wants calm and work, and it is being drawn backwards by the meager 'Lessons of October'. But the party, which until now has displayed the utmost tolerance towards all of comrade Trotsky's earlier mistakes, and knew and valued his merits and ability, and left him in leadership posts, cannot have an unlimited capacity for tolerance and make a practice of it. The party cannot allow itself to be distracted from carrying out the most important tasks facing it.

Any evaluation of comrade Trotsky's piece inevitably raises the following question – what is one's attitude to this act? Is comrade Trotsky's approach to the question of the lessons of October accidental, or is this mistake connected with his earlier mistakes? I think that to understand the entire significance of 'The Lessons of October', it should be considered only in the context of comrade Trotsky's earlier mistakes. The latter is correct because it is not an accident at all to repeat the mistake on one of the basic issues of our party – such as the issue of the attitude to the peasantry – a mistake comrade Trotsky made in his work on permanent revolution in 1905 before he joined our party, and after he joined the party in the discussion on trade unions, in the disagreements before the Twelfth Congress of the party on the resolution on industry, and in last year's internal party discussion, as well as on the second question – about the struggle with the current Bolshevik leadership, a struggle which was most clearly in evidence during last year's discussion on the question of the regeneration of cadres and which is being continued in 'The Lessons of October'.

That is the internal connection in comrade Trotsky's mistakes, and that is why his most recent act cannot be viewed in isolation from the last one, as some kind of accident. For every time, comrade Trotsky stumbles on precisely

2 *Trinadtsatyi s'ezd* 1924, p. 168.

these basic issues of Bolshevism. This all indicates that apparently comrade Trotsky has not formed a lasting bond with Bolshevism. Evidently he still retains some undisturbed roots from the past, which stop him from following the correct Bolshevik path without obstacles and zigzags, a path lit by the fighting traditions of the party and marked by the signposts of Leninism.

Nor is it by chance that the party has so far heard from comrade Trotsky no articulate, direct and honest acknowledgement of his mistakes from the past, neither from before his entry into our party nor since he joined the ranks of our party. The party has heard nothing of the kind. We can only point to statements by comrade Trotsky about 'the rearming of Bolshevism', and that he 'came to Lenin fighting', and the like.³ But the party has heard no clear, direct acknowledgement of mistakes. Of course, it is much easier to speak of the sins of others than of one's own sins, as comrade Trotsky does in 'The Lessons of October'. In the meantime, comrade Trotsky must find the courage to acknowledge his own mistakes and draw a line under them, and back up this clear acknowledgement with actions. This would have a thousand times more educational significance for the maturing cadres of the party and for the young than 'The Lessons of October'. But this has not happened, and this gives us the right to say that the internal link of all of these most important mistakes by comrade Trotsky, including the appearance of 'The Lessons of October', is none other than an attempt within the framework of the Bolshevik Party to counterpose Trotskyism, as a developing tendency, to Leninism.

But the party has matured enough to not allow any such substitution of Leninism with Trotskyism. This act by comrade Trotsky will only help the party to investigate with the utmost seriousness its history and to learn from Lenin. The party is growing, its cadres are growing, and they will respect the needed unity of the party and will give the needed rebuke to all who want by error or by design to shatter this unity. The party must point out to comrade Trotsky that it can be nothing other than the party created by Lenin and the working class, with all its revolutionary traditions, with all its impatience with ditherings and opportunism and with all its discipline that is binding on everyone.

3 See Trotsky 1965a, pp. 51, 57. The term '*perevooruzhenie*' is translated here as 'renew its armament'.

‘Letter from Comrade Trotsky to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)’¹

L. Trotsky

Dear Comrades!

The first item on the agenda of the forthcoming plenum of the CC is the question of the resolutions from local organisations on *Trotsky's* ‘action’. Due to my health, I will not be able to take part in the work of the plenum, but I think I can contribute the following brief clarifications to any consideration of this question:

1. I have always believed and I still believe that I could bring to the discussion enough substantial objections of principle and fact against the charges being levelled against me that I am trying to ‘revise Leninism’ and ‘minimise’ Lenin’s role. I refrained however from offering any explanation on that basis not only because of my health but also because, *in the context of the present discussion*, any statement I make on this subject, regardless of content, character and tone, will serve only to deepen the polemic [*polemika*] further, to transform it from a one-sided into a two-sided polemic, to give it an ever sharper cast.

And now, looking at the entire course of the discussion, and despite the fact that, throughout it, many untrue and quite monstrous accusations have been made against me, I think that my silence was correct in terms of the general interests of the party.

2. In no way however can I accept the charge that I am pursuing my own special course (‘Trotskyism’) and that I am endeavouring to revise Leninism. The view, which is being ascribed to me, that I somehow did not come to Bolshevism but that Bolshevism came to me, seems simply monstrous to me. In my introduction to *The Lessons of October*, I state candidly (p. 62) that Bolshevism prepared for its role in the revolution through an implacable struggle not only against Populism and Menshevism but also against ‘conciliationism’, i.e.

1 ‘Pis'mo tov. Trotskogo plenumu TsK RKP(b)’, *Pravda*, no. 16, 20 January 1925, p. 3, and simultaneously in *Izvestiia*, no. 16, 20 January 1925, p. 2. This letter was published together with a resolution adopted at the plenum concerning Trotsky’s recent actions (see ‘Resolution’, Document 25).

the tendency to which I belonged. Never in the past eight years has it occurred to me to look at any question from the viewpoint of 'Trotskyism' which I considered and still consider to have been politically liquidated long ago. Regardless whether I was right or wrong about any issue facing our party, I always sought to resolve those issues by drawing on the general theoretical and practice experience of our party. Not once in these years did anyone say to me that these or those ideas or proposals revealed a special tendency, 'Trotskyism'. This word emerged quite unexpectedly for me only during the discussion of my book 1917.

3. The most politically significant issue in this regard has been about the evaluation of the peasantry. I firmly deny that the term 'permanent revolution', which applies entirely to the past, in any way caused me to adopt a careless attitude towards the peasantry in the context of the Soviet Revolution. If at any time after October I returned for private reasons to the term 'permanent revolution', it was only in reference to party history, i.e. it was a reference to the past, not an explanation of current political tasks. In my view, the effort to construct irreconcilable contradictions on the basis of this issue is not worthy either of the eight years' of experience of revolution we have gone through together, or of the tasks of the future.

I equally reject the statements and references to my so-called 'pessimistic' attitude towards the fate of our task of building socialism in the face of the retarded process of the revolution in the West. Despite all the difficulties caused by capitalist encirclement, the Soviet dictatorship possesses great economic and political resources. I have repeatedly developed and argued this idea at the behest of the party, especially at international congresses, and I think that this idea retains all its force for the present period of historical development as well.

4. As to the controversial questions settled by the Thirteenth Congress of the party, I have not said anything either in the CC or in the Council of Labour and Defence (STO), nor have I made any proposals whatsoever outside of the leading party and Soviet institutions, which would have directly or indirectly raised questions that have already been resolved. After the Thirteenth Congress, new economic, soviet and international tasks arose, or were more clearly defined. It proved to be exceptionally difficult to resolve them. It was completely antithetical to my way of thinking to try to offer up any kind of 'platform' to counter the work of the CC of the party in solving these questions. For all those comrades who attended the meetings of the Politburo, the plenum of the CC, STO or RVS SSSR, this statement needs no corroboration. The controversial questions settled at the Thirteenth Congress were raised again in the last discussion without any connection to my work, and also, as far as I can judge at the moment, without any connection to the practical questions of party policy.

5. Inasmuch as the formal pretext for the recent discussion was the introduction to my book *1917*, I consider it necessary above all to refute the accusation that I published my book, as it were, behind the CC's back. In fact, the book was published (while I was undergoing treatment in the Caucasus) on exactly the same basis as all other books, whether mine or of other members of the CC, or of party members in general. Of course, it is the CC's business to establish some form of supervision [*kontrol'*] over party publications; but I have in no way and not in the slightest degree violated those norms of supervision which have obtained up to now, nor have I had any cause to violate them.

6. The introduction to 'The Lessons of October' represents the further development of ideas which I have expressed frequently in the past and particularly over the past year. I list here only the following lectures and articles: *On the Road to the European Revolution* (Tiflis, 11 April 1924), *Perspectives and Tasks in the East* (21 April 1924); *May Day in the West and the East* (29 April), 'At a New Turning Point' (introduction to the book *The First Five Years of the Communist International*), *Through What Stage Are We Passing* (21 June, 1924), *Problems of Civil War*.²

All the aforementioned lectures were prompted by the defeat of the German revolution in autumn 1923, and were printed in *Pravda*, *Izvestiia*, and other publications. Not a single member of the CC, nor indeed of the Politburo as a whole, ever indicated to me that there was anything wrong in these works. Similarly, not only did the editors of *Pravda* provide no comments on these lectures, they never made the slightest attempt to point out to me that they disagreed with one or another point in them.

Of course, I never saw my analysis of October in connection with the German events as a 'platform', and did not countenance the idea that anyone would see this as a 'platform', which it never was and never could be.

7. Since the charges now include several other books of mine, including several which have been published in multiple editions, I feel it necessary to state that neither the Politburo as a whole nor a single member of the CC ever indicated to me that this or that article or book of mine could be interpreted as a 'revision' of Leninism. This relates in particular to my book *1905*, which came out while Vladimir Il'ich was alive, went through several editions, was warmly recommended by the party press, was translated by the Comintern into foreign languages, and is now being used as the *prime evidence in the accusation of revising Leninism*.

2 Trotsky 1968; Trotsky 1973a; Trotsky 1973b; 'At a New Turning Point', in Trotsky 1945, pp. 1-15; Trotsky 1965c; Trotsky 1970b.

8. I have only one aim in putting forward these views, as already stated at the start: to help the plenum to settle the question that is the first item on the agenda.

Regarding the statement, repeated in the discussion, that I am attempting to secure a ‘special position’ in the party, that I do not submit to discipline, that I refuse to carry out this or that task given to me by the CC, etc. etc., I categorically declare, without submitting to an evaluation of these statements, that I am ready to perform *any* work charged to me by the CC in *any* post and *without any* post, and of course, under *any* form of party supervision.

There is no need in particular to argue that, after the recent discussion, the interests of our cause demand my speedy dismissal from the duties of the chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council.

In conclusion, I should point out that I did not leave Moscow before the plenum, so that, if necessary, I would have the opportunity to respond to these or any questions, or provide any clarifications that might be needed.

L. Trotskii

15 January 1925

Kremlin

‘Resolution of the Plenums of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) and of the Central Control Commission on the Actions of Comrade Trotsky, 17 January 1925 (Adopted by a Majority of All Members of the CC with Two against and by All Members of the CCC with One Abstention)’¹

The fundamental basis of the entire success of the Bolshevik Party has always been its steel-like unity and iron discipline, and the genuine unity of its views on the basis of Leninism. Comrade Trotsky’s ceaseless attacks on Bolshevism mean that the party must either abandon this fundamental basis or put an end to such attacks once and for all.

Internationally, comrade Trotsky’s attacks against the party are seen by the bourgeoisie and the Social Democrats as the harbinger of a split in the RKP and therefore of the collapse of the entire proletarian dictatorship. International imperialism is now partly drawing its practical conclusions about the USSR from this assumption – despite the fact that objectively the position of the USSR is more stable now than it has ever been before.

Domestically, comrade Trotsky’s oppositionist attacks are seen by all anti-Soviet and vacillating elements as a signal – to unite against the policy of the party in order to force the regime of the proletarian dictatorship into making concessions to bourgeois democracy.

Anti-proletarian elements in the state apparatus, which are striving to ‘emancipate’ themselves from the party leadership, are placing their hopes in comrade Trotsky’s struggle against the CC of the party. The dictatorship of the proletariat, and especially one of comrade Lenin’s most important teachings about the need to reform the entire state apparatus in the spirit of worker-peasant power, are in mortal danger.

1 ‘Rezoliutsiia o vystuplenii tov. Trotskogo, priniataia plenumami TsK RKP(b) i TsKK 17 ianvaria 1925 g.’, *Pravda*, no. 16, 20 January 1925, p. 3., and simultaneously in *Izvestiia*, no. 16, 20 January 1925, p. 2. It was published together with a letter from Trotsky to the plenum a few days earlier (see ‘Letter’, Document 24).

In and around the party, comrade Trotsky's opposition has made his name a banner for all non-Bolshevik, non-Communist, anti-proletarian deviations and groupings.

Generally speaking, the sum total of comrade Trotsky's actions against the party can be characterised as an attempt to transform the ideology of the RKP into some kind of 'Bolshevism' *without Leninism* in a 'modernised' Trotskyist form. That is not Bolshevism. It is a revision of Bolshevism. This is an attempt to substitute Leninism with Trotskyism, i.e. an attempt to substitute the Leninist theory and tactics of the international proletarian revolution with a variety of Menshevism, which was formerly represented by the old Trotskyism, and is currently represented by the resurrected 'new' Trotskyism. Essentially, modern Trotskyism is a falsification of communism and is near in spirit to the 'European' form of pseudo-Marxism, i.e. it is ultimately in the spirit of 'European' Social Democracy.



For the few years that comrade Trotsky has been in the RKP, our party has had to conduct four discussions on a national scale with comrade Trotsky – not to mention the smaller controversies over extremely important issues.

The first discussion – about the Brest Peace. Comrade Trotsky did not understand that the peasantry did not want, and was not able, to fight, and he pursued a policy which nearly carried a steep price. It required comrade Lenin's threat to quit the government, and the tense struggle at the Seventh Congress of the party, to correct this error and secure – even on the worst terms – the Brest 'breathing-space'.

The second discussion – about the trade unions. In fact, this was about the attitude towards the peasantry which had been stirred up against war communism, about the attitude to the non-party masses of the workers, and in general about the party's approach to the masses at a time when the Civil War was already over. A sharp discussion all across Russia was needed, as was a rigorous campaign by the whole nucleus of the party led by comrade Lenin against the 'febrile heights' of Trotskyism, if the party was to be saved from the mistakes which threatened all the achievements of the revolution.

The third discussion – on the 'party apparatus', the 'plan', the alleged 'peasant inclination' of the CC, the 'struggle between the generations', etc. In fact, this too was about the economic alliance between the proletariat and the peasantry, about price policy, about currency reform, about the need to orientate party policy according to the worker core, about preserving the guiding role of the party in the economy and in the state apparatus, about the struggle against

the 'freedom' of factions and groupings, and about the preservation of the guiding role of Bolshevik cadres in the party. In short, it was about preserving the Leninist course of the party during the NEP period. In this discussion comrade Trotsky was already clearly the mouthpiece of the petty-bourgeois deviation. He again urged the party to adopt the policy that could have led to the collapse of the revolution, for this policy would have strangled the economic successes of the party at birth. The petty-bourgeois opposition, led by comrade Trotsky, forced itself into the position where, not wanting to recognise its own fundamental errors, it had to take the position 'the worse the better', i.e. to gamble on the failure of the party and Soviet power.

An intense struggle was needed to repel this petty-bourgeois attack on the citadel of Bolshevism. Now everyone can see that the talk of the Trotskyists about the 'ruin of the country' in the autumn of 1923 was merely an expression of petty-bourgeois fear, a distrust of the forces of our revolution, and a complete failure to understand our economics. The reform of the currency, in opposition to which comrade Trotsky had proposed his doomed 'plan', restored economic health, and was an enormous step on the road to the economic renaissance of the country. Industry is reviving, despite the failure of the harvest in 1924. The material situation of the workers is improving. The party emerged stronger from the trial. The Lenin Levy strengthened the party with new proletarian forces. But if the Bolshevik Party had not so steadfastly and unanimously resisted the semi-Menshevik recidivism of Trotsky, the real dangers for the country, for the working class and for our party would have been incalculable.

In the final analysis, all of comrade Trotsky's actions against the general party line from 1918 to 1924 came from a semi-Menshevik failure to understand the role of the proletariat in relation to the non-proletarian and semi-proletarian strata of the toilers, from minimising the party's role in the revolution and in the building of socialism, and from a failure to understand that the Bolshevik Party could carry out its historic mission only if it was truly ideologically united and monolithic.

The fourth discussion, which is taking place now, revealed even more clearly the serious, comprehensive disagreements between comrade Trotsky and the Bolshevik Party. It is now clearly a matter of two fundamentally opposed systems of politics and tactics. In this discussion, comrade Trotsky has already launched a direct attack against the basic principles of Bolshevik philosophy. Comrade Trotsky 1) *completely* rejects the entire doctrine of the motive forces of the Russian Revolution, a doctrine which was provided by Leninism from 1904 onwards, and which forms the basis of all the tactics of Bolshevism in the three Russian revolutions; 2) in opposition to the Bolshevik evaluation of the motive

forces of the Russian revolution and to the Leninist doctrine of the world proletarian revolution, he offers his old 'theory' of permanent revolution – a theory which proved totally bankrupt in the three Russian revolutions (as well as in Poland and Germany) and which comrade Lenin repeatedly characterised as an eclectic (confused) attempt to unite petty-bourgeois Menshevik opportunism with 'leftist' phrases and as an attempt to leap over the peasantry; 3) tries to convince the party that Bolshevism had to 'ideologically re-arm itself' before taking the path of the dictatorship of the proletariat, i.e. it had to abandon Leninism and adopt Trotskyism; 4) advocates the idea of 'dividing' Bolshevism into two parts, namely a) Bolshevism before the October Revolution of 1917 which had some kind of secondary significance, and b) Bolshevism since October 1917 which (Bolshevism) had to grow into Trotskyism so as to fulfil its historic mission; 5) 'interprets' the history of October itself in such a way that the role of the Bolshevik Party disappears and prime place is taken by the role of the figure of comrade Trotsky himself according to the formula 'the hero and the crowd', whereby his version of the 'peaceful insurrection' which allegedly took place already on 10 October 1917 has nothing in common with Bolshevik views of the armed insurrection; 6) describes the role of Lenin in the October Revolution very ambiguously; it is depicted as if comrade Lenin preached the seizure of power by conspiratorial methods behind the back of the Soviets, and as if comrade Lenin's practical proposals arose from his own failure to understand the situation; 7) fundamentally distorts the mutual relations between comrade Lenin and the CC of the party, depicting them as a ceaseless war between two 'powers'; comrade Trotsky tries to persuade the reader of this 'version' by publishing (without the permission of the CC) extracts from several documents, presented in a false light and in a context that distorts the truth; 8) portrays the role of the entire CC of the party, which led the insurrection, in such a light as to sow the deepest mistrust in the core of the current party leadership; 9) distorts the most important episodes of the revolution from February to October 1917 (the April and June demonstrations, the July days, the Pre-parliament, etc.); 10) distorts the tactics of the Executive Committee of the Comintern by trying to blame the failures in Germany, Bulgaria etc. on the nucleus of the Executive Committee – and by sowing mistrust towards the CC of the RKP and the Executive Committee of the Comintern [IKKI] as well.

The scale of the differences between comrade Trotsky and the Bolshevik Party, by the way, grew from year to year, and recently from month to month. The disagreements are not only about questions from the past; the past itself is being 'revised' in order to 'prepare' a platform for the current, real political disagreements. In particular, comrade Trotsky needs his retrospective exposure of the 'right wing' in early Bolshevism as a cover for the right to form a real right

wing in the RKP now – in the era of NEP and the delay in the world revolution, when petty-bourgeois dangers exist that might foster the formation of a right wing in the RKP and the Comintern.

And the ‘revision [*reviziia*]’ of Leninism on the questions of the motive forces of the revolution (i.e. primarily the question of the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry) is the ‘justification’ for the non-Bolshevik views about the current policy of the party vis-à-vis the peasantry. Comrade Trotsky’s incorrect anti-Leninist evaluation of the role of the peasantry in the revolution is the issue to which our entire discussion between the party and comrade Trotsky returns again and again. Mistakes on this question have become especially dangerous now, when the party, pursuing its slogan ‘Face to the Village [*litsom k derevne*]’, is working intensively to strengthen the merger [*smychka*] between city industry and peasant agriculture, to enlist the broad masses of the peasantry in the work of Soviet construction, reviving the Soviets etc., and when the future success or failure of the revolution depends precisely on the correct or incorrect relations between the proletariat and the peasantry.

On the fundamental questions of international politics (the role of fascism and Social Democracy, the role of America in Europe, the length and nature of the ‘democratic pacifist era’, on which the evaluation by comrade Trotsky and SD ‘centre’ coincided in many respects), comrade Trotsky took a different position from that of the RKP and the entire Comintern, without first attempting to offer even a preliminary explanation of his view either to the CC or to the ECCI. The delegation of the RKP at the Fifth Congress of the Comintern, with the full agreement of the CC of the RKP, proposed to comrade Trotsky that he explain his views on international questions to the Congress of the International. Comrade Trotsky refused to do this at the Congress, but considered it expedient to do so a short time later at the meeting of veterinary surgeons and bypassing the Comintern and the RKP.² Recently comrade Trotsky has not acted together with the party on a single big issue, but has acted more often against the positions of the party.

The party faces a most important, immediate, political task: to take a decisive course to overcome the factors which divide the city and the countryside, i.e. to take up comprehensively the question of further lowering the prices of city products, creating the conditions for a real boom in agriculture (land management and land use), to devote concentrated attention to the real revitalisation of agricultural cooperatives (genuine voluntary membership, election of staff, credit), to raise and solve the question of easing the tax burden on the peas-

2 See Trotsky 1965c.

antry and reforming the tax policies, and also to focus all of the party's efforts on how to improve the political conditions in the village (a more accurate election process, the enlistment of non-party peasants, etc.).

This policy alone, outlined in all its basics by comrade Lenin, will lead to the real consolidation of state industry, securing the further development, growth, concentration and increase of the social power of the industrial proletariat, i.e. it will strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat under the conditions of the NEP not in words but in fact.

The very first condition of the successful execution of this policy is the complete preservation of the leading role of our party in the state and economic organs, and genuine unity in the party on the basis of Leninism.

It is precisely this decisive relationship at the present time between the party, the working class and the peasantry, which comrade Trotsky fails to understand.

This situation inevitably led to all the non-Bolshevik and anti-Bolshevik elements inside and outside of the country starting to see what they wanted to see in comrade Trotsky's position, and valuing and supporting comrade Trotsky precisely because he was being condemned by the RKP and the Comintern. A party that is leading the dictatorship of the proletariat in a situation where all anti-proletarian parties and groups are being deprived of 'freedom' must inevitably make enemies. All these enemies, especially the prosperous petty bourgeoisie, want to see in the present comrade Trotsky an individual who could shake the iron dictatorship of the proletariat, split the party, and put Soviet power onto a different course etc.

All the leaders of the Second International, the most dangerous lackeys of the bourgeoisie, try to make use of comrade Trotsky's ideological insurrection against the foundations of Leninism in order to compromise Leninism, the Russian Revolution, and the Comintern in the eyes of the worker masses of Europe, and in this way bind the SD workers to the chariot of the bourgeoisie. The renegade P. Levi published comrade Trotsky's book *The Lessons of October* in German with his own preface, and German Social Democracy has undertaken to disseminate this book which it widely advertises as a book directed against communism. Souvarine, who was expelled from the Comintern, is trying to provoke a split in the French Communist Party by spreading counter-revolutionary lies about the RKP. Balabanova, [Karl] Höglund and other renegades from communism are acting in a similar fashion. The Italian social fascists of *Avanti*, hirelings of the German bourgeoisie from *Vorwärts*, [Pierre] Renaudel and [Salomon] Grumbach from *Quotidien*, etc. etc. – all these elements are trying to show solidarity with comrade Trotsky in his struggle against the CC of the RKP and the IKKI.

The non-party workers, who should be seeing such a prominent party official as a model of solidarity with his own party, has in fact seen comrade Trotsky upsetting the unity of the party with impunity over the past few years. This situation undermines basic class discipline, without which the victorious dictatorship of the proletariat is not possible.

The peasantry should see that on the issue of the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, there is not the slightest vacillation in the RKP, and that the party is more united on this question than on any other. But the example of comrade Trotsky convinces the peasantry of the opposite and this most important question becomes the subject of all kinds of legends. This is the greatest threat to the workers' and peasants' bloc. Our party must lead the dictatorship of the proletariat in a peasant country. It is impossible to carry out this dictatorship while comrade Trotsky so affronts the peasantry.

The youth, which formerly saw comrade Trotsky as one of the greatest leaders of the party, is now convinced that this leader is dragging the youth into a 'fight between the generations', onto an anti-Leninist path.

The Red Army and the Red Navy, which should see the leader of the army as the model of party discipline and the model of correct understanding of the relations between the proletariat and the peasantry (our army is a mostly peasant army), is now obliged to look at comrade Trotsky in exactly the opposite way. Such a situation is replete with enormous dangers for the internal state of the army.

The entire party is convinced that in such a situation there can be no talk of preserving a genuine, Bolshevik, monolithic RKP, and is coming to the conclusion that our party would be threatened with enormous ideological and organisational risks if it permitted comrade Trotsky to continue his struggle against the Bolshevik Party. The Lenin Levy, which is sincerely striving to impart genuine Leninism, is convinced that comrade Trotsky is trying to replace Leninism with Trotskyism, and demands that the party make this crystal clear.

The entire Comintern sees how one of the most prominent members of the RKP is obstructing the bolshevisation of the sections of the Comintern and is in fact rendering ideological and political support to the enemies of Bolshevism in the camp of the Second International.

Given this state of affairs, the joint plenum of the CC and CCC find that to leave things as they were before, when the party decreed one thing but comrade Trotsky persisted in acting against the party, would mean to begin the de-Bolshevising of the party and it would even lead directly to its collapse. Rebuffing Trotskyism is linked to the question of how the RKP represents itself in 1925 – a Bolshevik Party cast from one mould and standing on the unshakable foundation of Leninism, or a party in which semi-Menshevik views might become 'legitimate shades of view'?

Having acquainted ourselves with comrade Trotsky's statement to the CC of 15 January 1925, the plenums of the CC and CCC note that comrade Trotsky has expressed his readiness to carry out, under the supervision of the party, any work entrusted to him, but find that in this statement comrade Trotsky has not uttered a single word in recognition of his mistakes; in fact he tries to insist on his anti-Bolshevik platform and limits himself to merely formal expressions of loyalty.



Pursuant to the above, and especially to the fact that comrade Trotsky, despite the well-known decisions of the Thirteenth Congress, is again raising the question of a fundamental change in the leadership of the party and is advocating views which have been categorically condemned by that congress, *the plenums of the CC and CCC decree:*

1) that the most categorical warning be delivered to comrade Trotsky that membership in the Bolshevik Party demands not just lip service but real subordination to party discipline and complete and unreserved abandonment of any form of opposition to the ideas of Leninism.

2) in view of the fact that the leadership of the army is inconceivable unless the leadership is completely backed by the authority of the entire party; that, without such backing, the danger arises of breaking the iron discipline in the army; that the Conference of Political Workers on the one hand, and the fraction of the RVS USSR on the other, have already recommended comrade Trotsky's removal from military work; and, finally, in view of the fact that comrade Trotsky himself in his statement to the CC of 15 January 1925³ recognised that 'the interests of our cause demand my speedy release from the duties of the chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council' – that comrade Trotsky's future work on the RVS USSR is regarded as impossible.

3) that the question of comrade Trotsky's future work in the CC be postponed until the next Party Congress with the warning that, in the event of any new attempt by comrade Trotsky to violate or refuse to carry out the decisions of the party, the CC will be obliged, without waiting for the Congress to be convened, to consider it impossible for comrade Trotsky to continue as a member of the Politburo and will raise the question at the joint meeting of the CC and CCC about removing him from work in the CC.

4) that the discussion be regarded as closed.

3 Trotsky, Document 24.

5) That the party continue and develop its work of explaining throughout the ranks the anti-Bolshevik nature of Trotskyism from 1903 to 'The Lessons of October', and that the Politburo be charged with conveying to all the organs of propaganda (party schools, etc.) proper instructions on this matter; that the programmes of political instruction include an explanation of the petty-bourgeois character of Trotskyism, etc.

6) that, alongside the explanatory propaganda inside the party and in the RLKSM etc., it is necessary to explain to the non-party masses of workers and peasants in a broad popular manner about the deviations of Trotskyism and its false paths that lead to the break-up of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry.

‘Mistakes in “The Lessons of October” by Comrade Trotsky’¹

S.A. Piontkovskii

The third volume of comrade Trotsky’s collected works covers all of 1917 and is divided into two separate parts: a specially written article, serving as an introduction and providing a general overview of ‘October’, and the *Collected Works* themselves covering the 1917 period. The two parts of the book are bound by an unbreakable internal link.² The introduction endeavours to provide a scheme of October; it provides, or at least it was supposed to provide, according to the author’s intentions, strategic lessons to those parties which have not yet accomplished their own October. The *Collected Works* are supposed to show, substantiate, corroborate, and affirm what is in the introduction. Comrade Trotsky is absolutely correct in stating that October must be studied. He is absolutely correct that the October Revolution has not yet found its expression in print. It is undoubtedly true that even the raw materials on the history of October ‘have yet to be published’.³ By publishing his own collected works, comrade Trotsky has set himself the task of filling this gap. Of course, in light of this approach, the question of what is presented in the collection of comrade Trotsky’s works, and the manner in which it is presented, acquires enormous historical interest. The intention here is to provide a historical outline of ‘October’, and a compact body of documents on the history of ‘October’. In this context it is clear that the documents should be published whilst observing all the standards of historical scholarship, they must withstand historical criticism and satisfy all the demands that are placed on historical documentation. The editors of Trotsky’s collected works apparently understood this themselves because they not only collected different materials from Trotsky’s pen into a single volume, but also furnished all the printed materials with commentaries explaining and

1 S.A. Piontkovskii, ‘Oshibki v Urokhakh Oktjabria tov. Trotskogo’, *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, no. 1 (36), 1925, pp. 220–31.

2 Trotskii 1924d; Trotskii 1924 [*Sochinenii*, Vol. III: 1917. Chast’ 2: ‘Ot oktiabria do bresta’ (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo)]. The introduction, ‘The Lessons of October’, is in part 1.

3 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 86.

supplementing the printed materials. At first glance, they have observed the protocol for publishing documents. But in order to properly assess the historical value of the published works, it is necessary to classify precisely and clearly those documents which are printed in the book. One section of the *Works* includes individual pamphlets, articles from newspapers and journals, speeches delivered by Trotsky, and what might be termed official papers, declarations and resolutions from various organisations and, finally, letters. The publishers did not ask themselves, primarily, what historical value all the published materials possessed.

If the articles and pamphlets are a historically authentic documentary record and accurately reflect the viewpoint of the author, then given the fact that many of the works are compiled from speeches, one must ask first of all how accurately and how faithfully they have been preserved.

In the editors' introduction, the compilers themselves point out 'that there is scarcely a single speech which was preserved in stenographic notes'.⁴ These two [sic] comments should already oblige us to take a critical stance towards the speeches included in the volume. What criteria guided the compilers in their selection of one or another edition of a speech, how did they reconstruct a sound and historically reliable text of the speeches? That comrade Trotsky's speeches, reprinted in the press for a variety of political purposes, differ sharply from one another, is evident from just one example in this volume taken from Trotsky's speech at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Petrograd Soviet on the question of Kronstadt and which is reproduced in sharply different forms in *Izvestiia* and *Novaia zhizn'* (pp. 51–2, *Sobr. soch.*).⁵ Neither the introduction nor the notes contain any kind of indication why the publishers gave preference to one or another speech; only in one example, while reproducing a speech on the question of the war delivered by comrade Trotsky to the Combined Meeting of the Social-Democratic Members of the First All-Russian Congress of Soviets, do the editors provide the note, in comrade Trotsky's own words, that the 'speech had obviously been retouched [*retushirovan*]',⁶ – although this note relates to 1924. The remaining speeches have no critical apparatus at all.

In relation to the third group of documents – resolutions and official papers, being for the most part the formulation of the official position of the party, it would be interesting, and quite necessary for any historical evaluation of Trotsky's activity, to establish in the notes comrade Trotsky's role as their

4 Trotskii 1924d, p. lxx.

5 Trotskii 1924l, pp. 51–52.

6 Trotskii 1924e, p. 400, n. 111.

author, since what has been provided in the notes tells us for the most part only about the role of Trotsky as a stylist [*stilst*]. The notes should of course indicate the extent to which Trotsky played a role in shaping the content of these resolutions; and they should not only emphasise his stylistic contributions to these resolutions. Not having undertaken a historical evaluation of the published documents, the editors nonetheless supplied them with notes and addenda. Before analysing the notes substantively, it is necessary to note that the addenda and appendices constitute a separate group of documents which are for the most part poorly connected with the basic text. Without doubt they include a number of documents of historical and biographical interest. But beyond these, it is nothing short of bewildering why some of the appendices were included. For a number of these documents, the editors themselves conscientiously point out that they were jotting down unpublished articles (Appendix 2),⁷ and drafts of unenacted resolutions.⁸ The editors themselves were not always able to determine the intent of one or another draft: 'there is every likelihood that they were intended', the editors conjectured for example about Appendix 12, 'as theses for the official document', while for Appendix 17 they state simply: 'we did not manage to determine why and where the resolution was proposed'.⁹ Such appendices have almost no historical value. Their biographical value is also not great, and they should serve as a basis only in the absence of other information.

Given the kinds of documents collected in Trotsky's book, the content of the notes themselves is of enormous significance. Without them, it is impossible to understand and historically evaluate all the actions, articles, speeches, and documents belonging to comrade Trotsky. The notes must provide an accurate historical picture of the origin and significance of this or that document. But if the notes have ignored the question of the historical value and authenticity of these or those documents, then they leave much to be desired as a commentary on the material. Above all they contain simple errors, for example, the Rostov strike happened in November 1902 and not in 1903 as indicated in note 3. They contain superfluous facts; for example, there is absolutely no need in the commentary on the surname [Sergei] Prokopovich to state, as note 261 does: 'from this derives the well-known nickname Prokukish';¹⁰ they contain many

7 Trotsky 1924m, pp. 332–334.

8 Trotsky 1924m, pp. 335–336, 341–345.

9 Trotsky 1924m, pp. 347–349, 362.

10 Trotsky 1924e, p. 457, n. 261. 'Prokukish' was a derogatory term used to refer to Prokopovich, Kuskova, and Kishkin as a group.

general areas that do not help the reader to make use of the documents, which do not facilitate their use. The historical literature on our revolution can now precisely reconstruct the composition of this or that version of the Provisional Government, the role of the bourgeoisie, especially the role of [Mikhail] Rodzianko in the February Days, the origin of the notes of 18 April, the exact date of the elections to the Third Duma, the assassination of Pleve, etc. The notes refer to missing elements in the published book, such as note 173, etc.¹¹ These are of course trifling details, but the commentaries also contain more interesting things. The commentaries are very quiet about the role Trotsky played in the party before the 1917 revolution, and about how the Bolsheviks, and especially Lenin, evaluated his position during the war; on the disagreements in the war period between revolutionary Social Democracy and Trotsky, note 40 states merely 'that in the course of the war there were fewer and fewer disagreements between the viewpoint of *Nashe slovo* and Lenin',¹² and, in the meantime in 1915 and 1916, Lenin characterised Trotsky's position during the war in the following manner: 'The phrase-banding Trotsky has completely lost his bearings on a simple issue. It seems to him that to desire Russia's defeat *means* desiring the victory of Germany. [...] But Trotsky regards this as the methodology of social-patriotism'.¹³ Elsewhere Lenin characterised Trotsky's entire position during the war: 'No matter what the subjective "good" intentions of Trotsky and Martov may be, their evasiveness objectively supports Russian social-imperialism' (*Sobranie sochinenii*, v. XIII, pp. 97 and 434).¹⁴ The disagreements between Trotsky and Lenin are not only ignored or played down, but in note 28 the commentators state specifically that the articles Trotsky wrote in America devoted to the February Revolution almost completely 'anticipated the political tactic of revolutionary democracy'.¹⁵ And furthermore Lenin's 'Letters from Afar' and Trotsky's group of articles devoted to the evaluation of the February Revolution are very different both in terms of their analysis of what happened, and also in their evaluation of the forces that had to be reckoned with. Lenin set

11 Trotskii 1924e, pp. 422–3, n. 173.

12 Trotskii 1924e, p. 377, n. 40.

13 Lenin 1964bb, pp. 275–6. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: '(Bukvoyed and Semkovsky give more direct expression to the "thought", or rather want of thought, which they share with Trotsky). Further, Piontkovskii uses the term 'social chauvinism' [*sotsial-shovinizm*] rather than Lenin's original term 'social patriotism' [*sotsial-patriotizm*].

14 Lenin 1964ii, p. 360.

15 Trotskii 1964a, p. 370, n. 28.

a practical task: he did not just coin slogans, he spoke about what had to be done now, immediately. He posed the question of the kinds of forces now in the revolutionary arena, and asked who was the ally of the proletariat, emphasising at the same time the independent revolutionary role of the peasantry. Lenin strongly emphasised the organisational task facing the party: 'The organisation of our party is the essential thing', 'no rapprochement with other parties', wrote Lenin.¹⁶ He pointed out in concrete and stark terms the need for the party organisation. The proletariat was confronted by the task of '*utilising the peculiarities* of the present transition situation, [it] can and will proceed, first, to the achievement of a democratic republic and complete victory of the peasantry over the landlords [...], and then to *socialism*' ('*Pis'ma iz daleka*', first letter).¹⁷ Trotsky's formulation was completely different. He posed the questions just as he had posed them in 1905. Although Trotsky spoke about the peasantry, he was not able to envisage the independent role of the peasantry: 'Where is our petty bourgeoisie in Russia? Its economic role is insignificant', Trotsky wrote, for example, in his article 'The Most Immediate Tasks of the Present Revolution'.¹⁸ The role of the peasantry in the revolution, in Trotsky's opinion, was for the most part a passive one. 'The revolutionary workers' government', wrote Trotsky in his article 'The Growing Conflict',

will possess the will and ability, already during the preparation of the Constituent Assembly, to carry out a radical democratic cleansing [*chistka*] in the country, to restructure [*perestroit'*] the army from top to bottom, to transform it into a revolutionary militia and *to show the peasant grassroots in practice* [my emphasis. s.p.] that their only salvation lies in supporting the revolutionary workers' regime. A Constituent Assembly, convened on the basis of such preparatory work, will truly reflect the revolutionary, creative forces of the country and itself will become the most powerful tool for the future development of the revolution.

Soch., p. 13¹⁹

16 I am unable to find the source for the first quotation, although this paragraph seems to refer to the third letter in Lenin 1964c, pp. 320–32; the second quotation is from Lenin 1964ccc, p. 292.

17 Lenin 1964c, p. 308. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: 'instead of the Guchkov-Milyukov semi-monarchy'.

18 Trotskii 1924n, p. 24.

19 Trotskii 1924o, p. 13.

Elsewhere, in the article 'From Whom and How to Defend the Revolution', Trotsky wrote:

The Russian peasantry must learn not to trust the promises of Rodzi-anko and the patriotic lies of Miliukov. The millions of peasants must be united against the liberal imperialists under the banner of the agrarian revolution and the republic. This work can be carried out in full only by a revolutionary government relying on the proletariat, a government which removes the Guchkovs and Miliukovs from power. This workers' government deploys all the resources of state power in order to put on their feet, to enlighten, to unite the most backward and dark rank-and-file of the toiling masses of the city and countryside. Only with such a government and with such preparatory work can a Constituent Assembly not just be a cover for the landholding and capitalist interests, but rather a true organ of the people and revolution.

Soch., p. 19²⁰

This excerpt is interesting because it points out the relationship which, in comrade Trotsky's opinion, exists between the proletariat and the peasantry, and also because it shows that at this point in time the very idea of the revolutionary government has not crystallised clearly in Trotsky's mind. Lenin formulated the task of conquering political power in very concrete terms and also expressed the need to adapt 'our tactics and immediate tasks to the *specific features* of every given situation'.²¹ It was from this that Lenin formulated the organisational problems, and spoke not only about why it was necessary to act but also how it was necessary to act. Trotsky did not always formulate precise and clear slogans; the distinctness of Trotsky's position lay in the fact that Trotsky posed the question about the creation of the revolutionary power of the proletariat, but he justified this position not on the basis of a general world situation and not on the correlation of forces on the world proletarian front, but with the fact that 'Russian capitalism from the very beginning had begun to develop into its most centralised forms. Already on the threshold of the first Russian Revolution in 1905, the Russian proletariat was hostilely disposed to the Russian bourgeoisie, as class against class' (*Soch.*, p. 24).²² That is to say, he was starting from his old constructs which Lenin had referred to already on the

20 Trotsky 1924p, p. 19.

21 Lenin 1964c, p. 330.

22 Trotsky 1924n, p. 24.

eve of the revolution: 'From the Bolsheviks Trotsky's original theory has borrowed their call for a decisive proletarian revolutionary struggle and for the conquest of political power by the proletariat, while from the Mensheviks it has borrowed repudiation of the peasantry's role' (Lenin, *Sobranie sochinenii*, v. XIII, p. 213).²³

But if the compilers of the commentaries do not always exercise moderation in their reconstruction of Trotsky's historical position, they are silent on what separated Trotsky and his group from revolutionary Social Democracy, to the point that in the notes on the First Congress of Soviets, they do not say a word about the fact that at this congress Trotsky formed a separate faction and that he was elected to the first version of the CEC from the faction of the Unifiers [*Ob"edinenttsy*]. At the First Congress of the Soviets, the Unifiers proposed their own resolutions on a range of issues. While the commentators are more than well disposed to Trotsky, they cannot be rebuked for this in relation to the others. Endeavouring to highlight the correctness of Trotsky's judgement in the February–March days, the commentaries not only affirm that Trotsky 'anticipated' the Bolshevik political line, but, while expounding on the position of *Pravda* in March 1917, they quote and interpret the documents quite subjectively. The commentators state, for example, that 'in the second issue of *Pravda* from 20(7) March, the article "On the Look-Out" also contained the idea that the proletariat has "common ground" with the Provisional Government on the issue of "realising the freedom of organisation, word, press, and assembly"'. And, moreover, the following is in the article word for word:

Prince Lvov's government is a government of landholders and capitalists. It is not for the revolution but against the revolution, and it does not want to give the people more, but only just enough to quieten down the revolution, but at the same time it understands that concessions must be made to the revolutionary masses, that concessions are unavoidable. What follows from this, what must the workers and soldiers do? Above all, they must weigh up which road is more advantageous ... The people cannot march together with and on the same side as the Provisional Government on all the issues, but it must work with it to smash, to smash the supporters of Nikolai Romanov. To smash them, while dislodging the old powers – from the tsar to the guard ... To proceed on their own. The members of the Provisional Government, apart from Kerensky, are

23 Lenin 1964ff, p. 419.

all monarchists. It is necessary to oppose them while demanding the republic.²⁴

That is the quotation from the second issue of *Pravda*. Commenting on the article 'The Provisional Government and Revolutionary Social Democracy' from the eighth issue of *Pravda* from 27 (14) March, the commentators of Trotsky's works said that in this period *Pravda* believed in the possibility of a famous collaboration with the Provisional Government, and considered it possible to support this to a certain degree. In support of their thinking, the commentators quoted the following excerpt: 'And for us, revolutionary Social Democrats, there is not even any need to mention that insofar as this Provisional Government truly fights against the remnants of the old regime, *it is guaranteed the resolute support of the revolutionary proletariat*. Whenever and wherever the Provisional Government, heeding the voice of revolutionary Social Democracy as represented in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, – clashes with the reactionary or counter-revolutionary forces, *the revolutionary proletariat must be ready to lend support to it*.'²⁵

The commentators, having quoted this excerpt and having supplied it with italics at various points, omitted only one thing which appears in the text of the article after the phrase quoted by them: 'But this is support of the cause and not of individuals, support not of a particular version of the Provisional Government but of the objectively revolutionary step which it has to take and insofar as it takes them. Therefore, our support must in no way tie our hands.'²⁶ These excerpts already show that *Pravda*, even before Lenin's return, did not paper over the class counter-revolutionary essence of the Provisional Government, but revealed that, starting from the formula of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, *Pravda* viewed the attitude to the Provisional Government as a tactical problem, leading to the development and deepening of the revolution. It was a question not of support for the Provisional Government as such, not about individual collaboration with it, but about applying and deepening, in the service of the revolution, those measures of the Provisional Government which could be advantageous; it was not a

24 M. Ol'minskii, 'Nastorozhe', *Pravda*, no. 2, 7 March (20 March), 1917, p. 3.

25 L. Kamenev, 'Vremennoe Pravitel'stvo i revoliutsionnaia sotsial-demokratiia', *Pravda*, no. 8, 14 March (27 March) 1917, p. 3. The italics have been added by the commentators to Trotsky's work, see Trotskii 1924e, p. 372, n. 28.

26 L. Kamenev, 'Vremennoe Pravitel'stvo i revoliutsionnaia sotsial-demokratiia', *Pravda*, no. 8, 14 March (27 March) 1917, p. 3.

question of marching lockstep with the Provisional Government but of using it to march past it. Indeed, from its very first steps, *Pravda* dissociated itself from the Provisional Government by trying to reveal its class nature and by calling on the proletariat and the peasantry not to trust the Provisional Government, but rather to organise and arm themselves. On 23 (10) March, for example, on the occasion of the Provisional Government's introduction of a loyalty oath, *Pravda* wrote in the article 'A Criminal Attempt': 'The oath is an attempt by the Provisional Government to pit the unconscious masses against the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies whenever it deems it necessary. The Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies must immediately declare: "Freedom is in danger".²⁷ The resolution of the Bureau of the Central Committee about the Provisional Government, printed on 8 April (26 March) in no. 18 of *Pravda*, stated: 'The order of the day is to consolidate the forces around the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies as the nuclei of revolutionary power which are alone capable both of beating back the efforts of the parasitic and bourgeois counter-revolution, and of realising the demand of revolutionary democracy and explaining the true class nature of the contemporary government'.²⁸ Posing the question about exposing the class nature of the Provisional Government, *Pravda* raised the question of arming the workers: 'We want to arm the people, the workers, and we are arming them', wrote *Pravda* in no. 7 [sic] on 30 (17) March.²⁹ In the issue for 31 (18) March, in the article on 'Conditions of Victory of the Russian Revolution', *Pravda* raised the question about the organisation of revolutionary forces on an all-Russian scale: 'We need a Russia-wide organ for all Russian democracy, authoritative enough to weld together the democratic forces in the capital and the provinces and to transform itself at the necessary moment from an organ of revolutionary struggle of the people into an organ of revolutionary power, mobilising all the vital forces of the people against the counter-revolution'.³⁰ Proceeding from this statement about the development of the revolution, *Pravda* raised the question about revolution in the countryside as well: 'The slogan of the revolution should be to change the old powers in the countryside', wrote *Pravda* in no. 6 on 24 (11) March. 'The organised peasantry must take power into its own hands at the local level. The village police [*uriadnik*], the county and other organs of the old power must be arrested and

27 M. Ol'minskii, 'Prestupnoe pokushenie', *Pravda*, no. 5, 10 March (23 March) 1917, p. 2.

28 'Rezoliutsii, priniatyie B.Ts.K. R.S.-D.R.P.', *Pravda*, no. 18, 26 March (8 April) 1917, p. 5.

29 V. N_ii, 'Zhdat' nel'zia', *Pravda*, no. 11, 17 March 1917, p. 1.

30 K. Stalin, 'Ob usloviakh pobedy russkoi revoliutsii', *Pravda*, no. 12, 18 March (31 March) 1917, p. 3.

disarmed. The peasants must form their own revolutionary peasant committees at the local level and transfer power into the hands of these committees'.³¹ Trotsky did not articulate the question of the role of the peasantry and the organisation of the revolutionary forces in the countryside in any form which 'anticipated' the ideas of Lenin. The commentators made no mention of this, even though they recommended to others that they 'carefully study *Pravda* as it was before Lenin's arrival'.³²

Consequently, although Trotsky's works superficially possess the scholarly apparatus required for the publication of documents, closer examination reveals that this apparatus, on the one hand, is ill-informed on many issues, is no stranger to objective moods and, despite its entire edifice, is unable to reveal the historically concrete origins of comrade Trotsky's works; on the other hand, by confusing and blurring the perspective, it impedes correct historical evaluation. Comrade Trotsky's introductory article contains a series of controversial and completely untrue assertions, and the materials, published without the apparatus of historical criticism, confuse the whole perspective. They support comrade Trotsky's schema only by obscuring and confusing their reconstruction of his own role, and without adding anything positive to his representation of the history of 'October'. The introduction has already been subjected to fundamental historical criticism, but it should nonetheless be noted that it too contains a number of under-analysed areas. As comrade Sokol'nikov has already pointed out in his article in *Pravda*, Trotsky was confused about the April demonstration and comrade Lenin's role in it; it is enough to pick up Volume XIV of Lenin's *Collected Works* to see how clearly Lenin evaluated the April demonstration, and the tactical line he drew from that evaluation.³³ Considering the October period, Trotsky first of all completely distorts the role of the Petrograd garrison and oversimplifies the Petrograd garrison's approach to the events, forgetting all about its class composition. In his introduction, Trotsky wrote: 'The Provisional Government wanted to be rid of the garrison. The soldiers did not want to go to the front. We gave that natural reluctance political form, a revolutionary purpose, "legal" cover' (p. LI);³⁴ elsewhere, while asserting that October was a confluence of completely exceptional circumstances, he said: 'Above all, an army was needed that was unwilling to fight any more' (p. LIV).³⁵ To judge from these quotations, it was as if Trotsky believed that

31 'Vlast' – demokratii', *Pravda*, no. 6, 11 March (24 March) 1917, p. 2.

32 Trotskii 1924e, p. 372, n. 28.

33 Sokol'nikov, Document 6, pp. 177–80; Lenin 1964s, pp. 213–16.

34 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 123.

35 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 126.

firstly the destruction of the old organised army apparatus and the emergence of a new one in the army had never happened, and secondly that the whole complex set of class relations, actions and aspirations, which the proletariat and peasantry were experiencing and exhibiting at that moment and which had to be reflected in the social composition of the army, had completely disappeared. According to Trotsky, it was beyond simple: 'an army was needed that was unwilling to fight any more', and organisations were needed that cleverly justified this lack of desire in the eyes of those who were unwilling to fight. But it is quite possible to agree with Trotsky's assertion that the disagreements over Lenin's position, namely as to whether it was necessary and possible to confront the Second Congress of Soviets with the fact of the insurrection, were 'not a question of principle, but rather a technical issue'.³⁶ They would have been technical in nature if Trotsky's assertion that 'a battle for Soviet legality was being waged between us and the conciliationists'³⁷ had been true. That was how Menshevism perceived the events, as was clear from Dan's position, and as set forth by Trotsky as well, but this was not the case in fact. The battle was not for legality but for the transformation of the Soviets into organs of power, for power itself. The Provisional Government also understood this perfectly, and strove to 'be rid of the garrison' in Petrograd, as Trotsky said, i.e. to disarm Petrograd, and at the same time to draw new forces into Petrograd. This was taken into consideration by the decree of the CC on 23 (10) October that raised the question of the course towards insurrection.³⁸ Trotsky incorrectly evaluated the relationship between the revolution in Petrograd and in the provinces. He said: 'The provincial bureaucracy was accustomed to do whatever Petrograd did: it did this in February, and did it again in October. Our great advantage was that we were preparing to topple a regime which had not yet managed to establish itself'.³⁹ If the first phrase is correct in relation to the pre-revolutionary past, if it is correct, even with reservations, in relation to the February Revolution, it is completely wrong in relation to October. 'A regime which had not yet managed to establish itself' was nevertheless in control of the state apparatus and was in the hands of certain classes, and wherever these social strata were strong they did not measure themselves against Petrograd; on the contrary, they brought up the question about how Petrograd's achievements had been destroyed, and about measuring Petrograd against them. In this respect,

36 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 126, 120.

37 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 123.

38 See *Resolutions* 1974, pp. 288–9.

39 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 128.

October in Moscow was typical. It was not just a question of there being an inadequate number of resolute leaders, not just that the political situation in Moscow was not as advantageous as in Petrograd, which allowed for the creation of an organisational apparatus well in advance of the insurrection. It was rather that counter-revolutionary Moscow did not measure itself against Petrograd, but, on the contrary, stubbornly defended itself right up to the point when in Moscow the cards of the counter-revolutionaries had been played and the enemies of the revolution started thinking about a campaign-style retreat to the Don, i.e. that there was the idea of preserving a fighting organisational apparatus, of preserving the vital forces and military technology, of creating a strong base for a future struggle. It must be noted that, analysing the October insurrection, Trotsky devoted a great deal of space to the question of the enormous role played, in his opinion, by making use of the Congress of Soviets, while saying not a single word here about the kind of organisational work done by the party in Russia in general and in and around Petrograd in particular, which had linked the garrisons of Kronstadt and Helsingfors with the insurrection, and had secured their support, and created armed detachments on the North-Western Front to defend the insurrection. As Trotsky would have it, the insurrection happened thanks to the successful and timely slogans, and not to the enormous, collective work of the party.

Lenin's position is also distorted to a certain extent, for example when Trotsky states and polemicalises with Lenin's advice to start the insurrection in Moscow, which Lenin, as is apparent from the printed documents, in no way stated as a categorical demand but only meant as a plan, a plan that not only did not exclude the possibility of action in Petrograd but indicated precisely how to carry out this action in Petrograd.

Therefore, the third volume of comrade Trotsky's collected works, while interesting, nonetheless contains a series of fundamental defects. You will search in vain in this volume for correctly, scientifically published historical documents. Before you can make use of them, you must know the history of 1917 well. But the shortcomings in the critical apparatus and in the selection of documents also pull the ground out from under the introductory article. They do not help it, it cannot rely on the documents, and, mistaken to its core and with a whole range of errors, it provides a schema which informs us only about the subjective proclivities of comrade Trotsky.

The task set by comrade Trotsky remains unfulfilled. 'October' has still not found success in print.

‘Lenin, Conspiratoriality, October’¹

E. Kviring

The accusation against Lenin of conspiratoriality, of Blanquism, was one of the common accusations by the Mensheviks through the long years of bitter struggle. After the February Revolution, this accusation was taken up with renewed force by the Mensheviks, SRS, and Kadets – by all the enemies of Bolshevism.

There is no sense in returning to these quarrels now. Not only is the October Revolution behind us, but so too are the years of the cruellest civil war, in which the great majority of the toiling masses participated on the side of the Bolsheviks.

Soviet power was won and strengthened through the struggle of millions. For many years, conspiratoriality, Blanquism (but without its revolutionary aspect, of course) became the main occupation of all anti-Soviet parties, especially the socialist parties, although this conspiratoriality found no traction at all in the broader masses.

The accusation of conspiratoriality against the Bolsheviks ignored the fact of seven years of Soviet power as a deeply popular power that could be toppled neither by conspiratorial insurrections [*vosstaniia*] inside the country nor by the intervention.

But maybe the October insurrection was carried out not according to Lenin, not by a Leninist path, but with corrections which fundamentally altered the Leninist line?

Unfortunately, this conclusion can be drawn from comrade Trotsky’s recollections in his pamphlet *Lenin*.²

We are all aware that comrade Trotsky was one of the organisers of the October insurrection, both as chairman of the Petersburg Soviet and as a member of the Revolutionary Committee,³ which was in fact the first government of the October Revolution.

1 E. Kviring, ‘Lenin, zagovorshchestvo, Oktiabr’, *Za Leninizm. Sbornik statei* 1925, pp. 248–58.

2 L.D. Trotskii, *O Lenine*, Gosizdat, chapter on ‘Perevorot’ [original footnote]. [Trotskii 1924a; Trotsky 1971, see chapter entitled ‘The Uprising’].

3 This refers to the MRC, the Military Revolutionary Committee that organised the insurrection.

This makes comrade Trotsky's recollections of the insurrection most valuable, but also most verifiable.

Unfortunately, comrade Trotsky relied too heavily on his own memory and therefore probably let a number of assertions slip in about Lenin's position, vis-à-vis the insurrection, which do not correspond to the factual evidence.

Comrade Trotsky conceded that 'my recollections of the last few days before the actual upheaval became extremely confused and telescoped in my memory, so that it is difficult for me to sort them out and establish clearly the time and place of every incident'.⁴

This is a general problem with all reminiscences, which are based on personal memory and not on documents, and it must be said frankly that a large number of all the reminiscences published in our country reproduce facts with a very large portion of subjectivity, often confusing the issue at hand.

We feel that this is precisely why comrade Lenin's position on the insurrection prior to October is so muddled in comrade Trotsky's recollections.

On the well-known question of comrade Lenin's decisive demand in September–October that the insurrection be accelerated, and that its timing not be linked with the convocation of the Second Congress of Soviets, comrade Trotsky stated that Lenin urged that 'the Party must seize power, arms in hand, and then we could talk about the Congress'.⁵

In Trotsky's view, comrade Lenin apparently wanted the party to seize power, circumventing the Soviets, and 'behind the back' of the Soviets.

In a polemic with comrade Lenin, he stated:

As in July, Lenin overrated both the shrewdness and the vigor – and perhaps the material possibilities too – of our opponents. To some degree, Lenin's appraisal of the enemy had a purpose which was tactically correct: By overestimating the enemy's forces, he aimed at stimulating the party and provoking it to redouble its efforts. And yet the party could not seize power by itself, independently of the Soviets and behind its back. This would have been a mistake, the consequences of which would have affected the attitude of the workers and might have had harmful repercussions within the Petersburg garrison. The soldiers knew their delegates in the Soviet; it was through the Soviet that they knew the party. If the uprising had taken place behind the back of the Soviet, independent of it, without its authority and not openly and for all to see as a further

4 Trotsky 1971, p. 95.

5 Trotsky 1971, p. 92.

step in the struggle for power, there might have been a dangerous confusion among the troops. Besides, one should not forget that in Petersburg, side by side with the local Soviet, there still existed the old All-Russian Central Executive Committee at the head of which stood the SR's and the Mensheviks. Only the Congress of the Soviets could be set against this Committee.⁶

Nor should it be forgotten that the old CEC (VTsIK), with SRs and Mensheviks in charge, still existed alongside the local Soviet in Petersburg and that this CEC could be countered only by the Congress of Soviets.

Comrade Trotsky reinforced this idea with this recollection about his meeting with comrade Lenin in Smolnyi on the very day of the insurrection on 25 October:

Lenin was overjoyed; he was cheerful, laughing, rubbing his hands. Then he lapsed into silence, thought for a while, and said, 'Oh, all right, one can proceed in this fashion as well, provided we seize power'. I understood that it was only then that he finally made peace with the fact that we were not proceeding by way of a conspiracy and a plot. But till the very end he was apprehensive lest the enemy thwart our plans or attack us, throwing us off balance. Only now, that is on the evening of October 25, he became more composed and gave his definite approval to the manner in which affairs were being conducted.⁷

What kinds of conclusions should we draw from these quotations?

First – Lenin apparently demanded that power be seized by means of a 'conspiratorial plot'.

Second – Lenin apparently demanded that in the course of this conspiratorial plot the party seize power independently of the Soviets and behind the Soviets' back.

Third – until the final day, i.e. the day of the insurrection, Lenin did not agree with the course being pursued by the party, a course that was being articulated and carried out in the CC by Trotsky.

This all boils down to one thing:

Lenin stubbornly pushed the party towards a Blanquist conspiracy, Trotsky did not permit this, and so a significant correction was made to the Leninist position.

6 My emphasis – E.K. [original footnote]. [Trotsky 1971, pp. 92–3].

7 Trotsky 1971, p. 96.

These are logical conclusions from comrade Trotsky's position, whether or not he wants them to be.

Nobody can cast doubt on the recollections of this or that conversation with Lenin, but every member of the party is obliged to verify their recollections, based on their memory, against existing documentary materials.

Let us do this now.

Let us begin with the more concrete issue: whether Lenin really demanded that the party seize power independently of the Soviets and behind the Soviets' back.

I do not think that we are talking about his well-known article 'On Slogans' here. By September–October, it had already become less applicable. In principle, the stance of this article is correct, and now it is not at all necessary that in, say, Germany, France, or England, the organs of insurrection be the Soviets. 'The Soviets appear later',⁸ – said Lenin, and we completely agree that the organs of insurrection might be, say, factory and plant committees and other mass worker organisations. This was the essence of his article 'On Slogans'.

In September–October though, it was about something else: whether it was absolutely necessary to link the insurrection to the Congress of Soviets, or whether it should begin with the Congress, so as not to invite defeat, so as not to give away the timing of the insurrection to our enemies.

Lenin demanded that the insurrection should not inevitably be linked to the Congress of Soviets, although Lenin also demanded that the Soviets of the capitals – Petrograd and Moscow – should take on the organisation of the insurrection.

Let us turn to the documents:

The first document.

Lenin's letter to the CC, PK, MK of the RSDRP(b), written in September 1917, began with the following words:

The Bolsheviks, having obtained a majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of both capitals, can and *must* take state power into their own hands.

They can because the active majority of revolutionary elements in the two chief cities is large enough to carry the people with it, to overcome the opponent's resistance, to smash him, and to gain and retain power.⁹

8 Lenin 1964a, pp. 183–90. This does not appear to be a direct quotation from the original.

9 Lenin 1964w, p. 19.

The second document.

The letter to the PK and MK of the RSDRP(b), written at the start of October:

Delay is criminal. To wait for the Congress of Soviets would be a childish game of formalities, a disgraceful game of formalities, and a betrayal of the revolution.

If power cannot be achieved without insurrection, we must *resort to insurrection at once*. It may very well be that right now power can be achieved without insurrection, for example, if the Moscow Soviet were to take power at once, immediately, and proclaim itself (together with the Petrograd Soviet) the government. Victory in Moscow is guaranteed, and there is no need to fight. Petrograd can wait. The government cannot do anything to save itself; it will surrender.

For, by seizing power and taking over the banks, the factories and *Russkoye Slovo*, the Moscow Soviet would secure a tremendous basis and tremendous strength, it would be able to campaign throughout Russia and raise the issue thus: we shall propose *peace tomorrow* if the Bonapartist Kerensky surrenders (and if he does not, we shall overthrow him). We shall hand over the *land* to the peasants *at once*, we shall make concessions to the railway and postal employees *at once*, and so on.¹⁰

At the time, these documents were not intended for publication, and this makes them especially valuable.

Is any more proof needed that comrade Trotsky committed a serious error in his reminiscences when he stated that Lenin wanted the party to take power in October independently and behind the back of the soviets?

There is obvious confusion on this issue. This can only mean that Lenin was fighting against the 'constitutional illusions'¹¹ linked with the Congress of Soviets.

He states directly: 'To wait for the Congress of Soviets would be a childish game of formalities, a disgraceful game of formalities, and a betrayal of the revolution'.¹²

Explaining this point in more detail in his theses on the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets', he writes:

¹⁰ Lenin 1964l, p. 141.

¹¹ A reference to Lenin 1964f, pp. 196–210.

¹² Lenin 1964l, p. 141.

The problem of the seizure of power by the Soviets is that of a successful uprising. That is why all the best forces of the party must be sent to the factories and barracks to explain to the masses their task and, taking their mood correctly in account, choose the proper moment for overthrowing the Kerensky government.

To insist on connecting this task with the Congress of Soviets, to subordinate it to this Congress, means *to be merely playing at insurrection* by setting a definite date beforehand, by making it easier for the government to prepare troops, by confusing the masses with the illusion that a 'resolution' of the Congress of Soviets can solve a task which only the insurrectionary proletariat is capable of solving by force.¹³

This is what Lenin was fighting against: against illusions, as if the resolutions of the Congress of Soviets could solve the question 'which only the insurrectionary proletariat is capable of solving by force'.

He demanded that the party tell soldiers and workers firmly that the proletarian overthrow cannot be achieved by peaceful means, even by the Congress of Soviets; that it required an armed uprising.

Did Lenin have misgivings that the Congress of Soviets might in fact come out against Soviet power? Not in the slightest. On the contrary, in all his writings from this period he insistently demonstrated with statistics that the majority of the people was behind us. He was deeply convinced of this. But Lenin was afraid that the Kornilovites would go onto the attack, seize the initiative, get the upper hand, and then they would not allow the Congress to convene and they would smash us into pieces, into Petrograd, Moscow, etc.

Lenin called for the Soviets of the capitals to take responsibility for the insurrection in the name of the Soviets of the entire country.

And surely this is what actually happened?

Surely the Petrograd Soviet confronted the Second Congress of Soviets with the fact of the insurrection? Surely the Congress could have gone backwards, if it had so desired?

Lenin was completely correct both about our October Revolution and about the coming revolutions in other countries.

The insurrection did not have to be timed to coincide with the Congress of Soviets. We will now turn to other completely Marxist factors in order to determine whether enough conditions were in place for an insurrection.

13 Lenin 1964m, pp. 143–4.

Comrade Trotsky assures us that Lenin tried to organise the insurrection and seizure of power 'by means of a conspiratorial plot', i.e. not through a mass organisation, the path taken by Trotsky.

Let us turn once again to the documents:

It is possible to begin from afar, from comrade Lenin's first article, written after the February Revolution while he was still abroad, and published in *Pravda* on 21–22 March 1917 under the title: 'The First Stage of the First Revolution'.¹⁴ In it, Lenin was already demanding that the proletariat be armed for the purpose of strengthening, broadening, etc. the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, i.e. this is a long way from the path of the conspiratorial plot.

Let us skip over the articles written by Lenin after the July defeat of the Petrograd workers. In these, Lenin also called for a mass organisation for the insurrection.

Let us pause on the most valuable document, which was not intended for publication at the time either, namely the letter to the CC of our party, written in September 1917 and published subsequently under the title: 'Marxism and Insurrection'.

This article, in the form of a letter, and despite its militant and current character, was the theoretical foundation of the present Marxist understanding of the insurrection as presented by Lenin. In this article, Lenin, with his characteristic precision, defined the distinction between Marxism and Blanquism in his definition of insurrection. Here is his definition:

To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class. That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon a *revolutionary upsurge of the people*. That is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon that *turning-point* in the history of the growing revolution when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the *vacillations* in the ranks of the enemy and *in the ranks of the weak, half-hearted and irresolute friends of the revolution* are strongest. That is the third point. And these three conditions for raising the question of insurrection distinguish *Marxism from Blanquism*.¹⁵

Is it possible to suggest that Lenin, in this secret letter to the Central Committee defining his attitude to insurrection, was really pursuing a Blanquist conspiracy

14 Lenin 1964c, pp. 295–342.

15 Lenin 1964j, pp. 22–3.

behind the back of the Soviets, not relying on the masses and mass organisations?

I do not think that anybody can seriously ask this question.

After all, he stated directly: 'Insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class'. How can Lenin be ascribed both a conspiracy and an attempt to rely not on the broad masses but only on the party (the party behind the back of the Soviets)?

There is an enormous contradiction between Lenin's words and the views ascribed to him by Trotsky.

Comrade Trotsky's memory was undoubtedly playing a bad joke on him on this issue. It should also be taken into consideration here that this is really only a matter of nuances about the practical work of preparing the insurrection.

It is well-known that Lenin took Marx's words on insurrection as an art very seriously.¹⁶ He relied heavily on this point, arguing that 'to refuse to treat insurrection as an art' is a betrayal of Marxism. The mass preparation of the insurrection in the factories and the barracks was for Lenin the first priority, but alongside this Lenin demanded the following:

In order to treat insurrection in a Marxist way, i.e., as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a single moment, organise a *headquarters* of the insurgent detachments, distribute our forces, move the reliable regiments to the most important points, surround the Alexandrinsky Theatre, occupy the Peter and Paul Fortress, arrest the General Staff and the government, and move against the officer cadets and the Savage Division those detachments which would rather die than allow the enemy to approach the strategic points of the city. We must mobilise the armed workers and call them to fight the last desperate fight, occupy the telegraph and the telephone exchange at once, move *our* insurrection headquarters to the central telephone exchange and connect it by telephone with all the factories, all the regiments, all the points of armed fighting, etc.

Of course, this is all by way of example, only to *illustrate* the fact that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to Marxism, to remain loyal to the revolution *unless insurrection is treated as an art*.¹⁷

16 Engels 1967, p. 227.

17 Lenin 1964j, p. 27.

Only similar subjects could raise the idea of conspiratorality. But what does 'conspiratorial plot' mean here? Perhaps it refers to the organisation of the headquarters [*shtab*]? But didn't we in fact already have a military headquarters at that time, even if quite a poor one, in the form of the military organisation, and is it possible to carry out any revolution without a conspiracy and without a headquarters? And hadn't comrade Trotsky organised both on a necessary scale? Wasn't Lenin, together with everyone, working on the preparation of the mass insurrection, and were there not articles, in addition to the tight conspiratorial (secret) plot, which were being published in *Pravda* for general consumption that were pushing for an immediate insurrection? And Lenin was writing these articles.

We can point above all to the article 'The Crisis has Matured',¹⁸ published on 7 October 1917, the name itself being eloquent enough.

But most important was the article entitled 'A Letter to Comrades', published in *Rabochii put'* on 19, 20, and 21 October, i.e. a few days before the insurrection. In this article, comrade Lenin fiercely castigated those vacillating Bolsheviks and argued that the insurrection had to be sped up. He demolished all the arguments against insurrection, arguing that the majority of the people were behind us, that the masses were ready to act, and that to delay was a crime against the revolution.

Lenin knew the laws of mass action no less and no worse than everyone else, and we cannot accuse the man, who taught us to 'count on millions' in the revolution, of striving for 'secret conspiratorality'.

Yes, Lenin demanded that the organisation of the insurrection by millions had to have its own illegal, military centre, for the action could count on success only if it was guided by a good leadership capable of calculating to the last detachment both its own forces and the forces of the enemy, and capable of consolidating the successes achieved by the first outburst of mass activity.

In this sense Lenin indeed supported a military conspiracy, and he again spoke openly about this in the very same article, but this was in no way Blanquist conspiratorality, but something quite different.

This is what Lenin himself said about this conspiratorality:

Military conspiracy is Blanquism, *if* it is organised not by a party of a definite class, *if* its organisers have not analysed the political moment in general and the international situation in particular, *if* the party has not on its side the sympathy of the majority of the people, as proved by objective

18 Lenin 1964k, pp. 74–85.

facts, *if* the development of revolutionary events has not brought about a practical refutation of the conciliatory illusions of the petty bourgeoisie, *if* the majority of the Soviet-type organs of revolutionary struggle that have been recognised as authoritative or have shown themselves to be such in practice have not been won over, *if* there has not matured a sentiment in the army (if in war-time) against the government that protracts the unjust war against the will of the whole people, *if* the slogans of the uprising (like 'All Power to the Soviets', 'Land to the Peasants', or 'Immediate offer of a democratic peace to all the belligerent nations, with an immediate abrogation of all secret treaties and secret diplomacy', etc.) have not become widely known and popular, *if* the advanced workers are not sure of the desperate situation of the masses and of the support of the countryside, a support proved by a serious peasant movement or by an uprising against the landowners and the government that defends the landowners, *if* the country's economic situation inspires earnest hopes for a favourable solution of the crisis by peaceable and parliamentary means.

This is probably enough.

In my pamphlet entitled: *Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?*¹⁹ (I hope it will appear in a day or two), there is a quotation from Marx which really bears upon the question of insurrection and which enumerates the features of insurrection as an 'art'.

I am ready to wager that if we were to propose to all those chatterers in Russia who are now shouting against a military conspiracy, to open their mouths and explain the difference between the 'art' of an insurrection and a military conspiracy that deserves condemnation, they would either repeat what was quoted above or would cover themselves with shame and would call forth the general ridicule of the workers. Why not try, my dear would-be Marxists! Sing us a song *against* military conspiracy.²⁰

Does comrade Trotsky have something against this kind of conspiratorialism, and did he himself not, before October, adopt this Leninist method of 'military conspiracy'? Why then did Trotsky so carelessly ascribe 'secret conspiratoriality' to Lenin?

Did comrade Trotsky mean by this that the Leninist conception of insurrection was not genuinely Marxist, or was he suggesting that in practice Lenin reneged on his own theoretical principles?

19 Lenin 1964xx, pp. 87–136.

20 Lenin 196400, pp. 212–13.

We know that comrade Trotsky has the ability to create a fog – to speak in insinuations, not coming to a point.

Trotsky also repeatedly paid homage to Lenin's genius.

Now, blithely, and without trying to verify his recollections against the preserved documents, he has cast a shadow on our dead leader.

One can disagree with Lenin, refute him, argue with him, but one must argue against what Lenin actually said and wrote at that time, against what the irrefutable documents say, and not against what has lingered in the memory from conversations with Lenin.

At one time, Martov accused Lenin of inconsistency, arguing that in conversations with him Lenin did not say then exactly what he wrote later.

Lenin caustically warned Martov not to rely on his own memory, as it had already let him down more than once.

After I had already written this article, I received the recently published volume of comrade Trotsky's collected works, with the author's introduction *The Lessons of October*. In this article, comrade Trotsky also tries to argue that in October, Lenin was in favour of the party seizing power independently of the Soviets. Quoting the abovementioned part from Lenin's article on treating insurrection as an art, Trotsky says: 'This formulation presupposed that the insurrection would be prepared and carried out by and in the name of the party, and that the victory would be sanctioned by the Congress of Soviets'.²¹

It turns out that this is not a question of comrade Trotsky's poor memory. What we have here is a very well thought-out act. I think that the documents I have supplied here show irrefutably that for Lenin it was not about the insurrection being carried out 'by and in the name of the party', but about it being carried out by the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets in the name of the Soviets of the entire country.

In sum, Trotsky is vainly trying to show that it was he who, in spite of Lenin and while nudging the vacillating CC of the party, carried out the preparations for October in his own, not Lenin's, way.

All in all, the article *The Lessons of October* is, to put it mildly, a not very modest attempt to place himself at the head of the October overthrow, having pushed into the background the party, in the form of its CC, the Petersburg and Moscow committees, and, along with them, Lenin as well.

Trotsky begins his article with the assertion that the October Revolution has not yet been reflected in the literature.

21 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 120.

Trotsky therefore has taken up the task of producing a serious work about October. Instead of this, we have, on the one hand, an attempt to portray individual comrades as a rightist deviation, and on the other – self-aggrandisement.

If there is any history at all in this article, it is very shoddy history, and it really distorts the Leninist approach to the October Revolution.

‘The Ideological Foundations of Trotskyism’¹

B. Kun

In the literature of Bolshevism, the expression ‘Trotskyism’ is not of recent origin. It only fell out of circulation for a short period, after the progenitor of this system joined the Bolshevik Party. Last year’s discussion in the Russian party has once again made ‘Trotskyism’ a current political term. The international response to the discussion around Trotsky has taken Trotskyism out of its Russian context and transformed it into an international political term.

Trotskyism has figured in all intra-party debates of the RKP since the revolution. Every tactical turn taken by the party to determine the political direction of the Soviet state has been preceded by discussions with Trotsky and with Trotskyism. The first was the party discussion about the Brest Peace. Then came the discussion about trade unions and, on the eve of the Twelfth Congress of the RKP, the discussion about the dictatorship over industry. In autumn 1923 and the following winter, the battlefield formed by Trotskyism was clearly expanded. Trotskyism has now gone onto the attack on all fundamental questions of party life: on the question of the role of the party, the centralisation of the party apparatus, and also the attitude of the old groups of leaders towards the party youth. Finally came the problem of ‘The Lessons of October’ and the entire intellectual substance of Bolshevism that was linked to it: Leninism in toto was drawn into the discussion. The burning question in the debate now is whether the Bolshevik Party led the proletariat and the peasantry of Russia to victory on the basis of principles laid out by Lenin or by Trotsky. Indeed, it is even a matter for ‘discussion’ whether the political leader and organiser of the victory was Lenin and the Bolshevik Party at all, or – someone else.

The discussion has opposed Leninism and Trotskyism against each other as entire systems. And while in this debate Lenin no longer features as ‘the professional exploiter of all that is backward in the Russian labour movement’ (Trotsky’s letter to Chkheidze of 25 February 1913), while Trotsky does not repeat what he once wrote in that same letter about Leninism, namely that ‘the entire edifice of Leninism ... is built on lies and falsification and contains

1 Béla Kun, ‘Die Ideologischen Grundlagen Des Trotzismus’, in *Um Den Oktober* 1925, pp. 138–59.

the poisonous seeds of its own destruction', then Trotsky still wants to plant a poisonous seed, Trotskyism, into Leninism.² However, just as the contours of Trotskyism are becoming clearer and clearer and contrasting more sharply with the fundamental principles of Leninism in these recurrent discussions, so too the contours and dimensions of the camp that is quarrelling inside the party are changing. This change does not of course redound to Trotskyism. The internal party discussions triggered by Trotsky have been transformed in the course of the previous year into a dispute between Trotsky together with his little group and the party.

Since the victory of the revolution, Trotskyism has developed in the Bolshevik Party along the following lines: discussion within the party; discussion with the party; finally, inevitably, discussion in opposition to the party.

Does Trotskyism Exist?

Comrades Brandler and Thalheimer felt a need to dissociate themselves from Trotsky's last speech. Not really from Trotskyism, about which, as their explanation shows, they know or want to know nothing, but from Trotsky. The Czech Rightists ([Břetislav] Hula, [Karel] Kreibich) also dispute the existence of Trotskyism. In their view Trotskyism is an arbitrary construction by Trotsky's enemies, if not a vain fantasy. They believed that it was even more arbitrary and senseless to counterpose Trotskyism and Leninism, which in their view could be entirely attributed merely to certain personal differences. That was also essentially the position of some of the French Rightists and the approximate fallback position of the Russian opposition.

The main point is not that Trotsky made a front against Lenin and the Bolsheviks for a decade and a half, but that he was alongside Lenin at the time of the October Revolution. The old differences over principle, tactics, and organisation were part of party history, and they would have lost their contemporary political significance in the fullness of time.

The differences that have surfaced in the party since the victory of the revolution (and – we want to add – they always brought Trotsky into conflict with Lenin and the comrades with whom he had built Bolshevism) have no connection with these 'historical questions'. The 'episodic' tactical deviations could not be traced back to any uniform basic principle – and so Trotskyism does not exist. These words just about sum up the international Right's support

2 *Lenin o Trotskom* 1925, pp. 217, 218; 'The Chkheidze Controversy', Document 14, p. 422.

for Trotskyism at the time, a support cloaked in an apparent, unconscious naiveté. This logic – as long as it does not merely emanate from the search for a leader for a rightist grouping – can also be a 'good faith' error, based in this case on ignorance of the historical connections between Trotsky's old and new roles. (Of course, good faith changes nothing about the unprincipled nature of this position).

Trotsky himself however destroyed this evidence of the Rightists. If Trotsky also intended to revise Leninism, his own Trotskyism cannot allow him to deny that Trotskyism is a particular ideological direction. On the theory of permanent revolution, the major component of Trotskyism that Lenin has been consistently fighting for a decade, he declared:

'I [i.e. Trotsky] see no reason to renounce what I wrote on this subject in 1904, 1905, 1906, and later' (*The New Course*).³

In December 1921, he wrote to the well-known veteran of Bolshevism, Ol'minskii:

'I by no means believe that I have been wrong about everything in my disagreements with the Bolsheviks'.

He stated exactly where he was right and where he was wrong in his view, in other words where Lenin and where Trotsky have erred:

And now I could easily divide my polemical articles against the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks into two categories: some were devoted to an analysis of the internal forces of the revolution, its perspectives (Rosa Luxemburg's theoretical Polish organ, *Neue Zeit*), and others were devoted to an evaluation of the factions of the Russian Social Democrats, their struggle and so forth. I could republish the articles in the former category without any corrections, as they completely and utterly mesh with the position of our party from 1917 onwards.⁴

On the fundamental problems of the theory of revolution, Trotsky therefore maintained the front against Lenin. Undeterred, he continued the struggle against Lenin's 'errors'. He affirmed his old position on the all-important question of the revolution: the motive forces of the Russian Revolution. This alone secures a special place for Trotsky in the Bolshevik Party. Of course, this position has nothing to do with Bolshevism. We want now to indicate its major

3 Trotsky 1965a, pp. 59–60.

4 See *Inprekorr*, no. 166, 1924 [original footnote]. ['The Chkheidze Controversy', Document 14, pp. 424–5].

features. On the question of whether Trotskyism exists, we can provisionally satisfy ourselves with the finding taken from Trotsky's own admissions (there are piles of these quotations):

1. On the fundamental question of the revolution, namely its methodology, Trotsky maintains his front against Lenin and Bolshevism. Of course this methodology could not change even after the victory of the revolution.

2. Trotsky opposes Leninism's concrete analysis of the internal forces of the revolution. His position denies the role of the peasantry as a revolutionary force and completely rejects the internal viability of the Russian Revolution in the absence of speedy external 'state support' from the West European proletariat.

3. In Trotsky's view therefore an unbreakable link of principle exists between the post-revolutionary and pre-revolutionary Trotsky, and this principle is based on a fundamental contrast between his view and Lenin's view of the main questions of the revolution. It follows:

4. That Trotskyism exists as an ideological, principled position and method, separate from Leninism, and must by definition generate tactical and organisational views which can be determined in advance, and which are different from, and contrast sharply with, Leninism.

It is a lack of principle to see no principles in these principles and to see no principled dispute behind them, but to want to divine personal conflicts in them. It is a lack of principle to step back from Trotsky's last action with the excuse that 'every opposition by definition gathers around itself all enemies of Soviet power', and therefore to dismiss it as 'accidental' or to fail to acknowledge at all that Trotskyism's very opposition to the party is becoming an attraction for the counter-revolution. A more virtuous, but no less unprincipled, position on the question of whether Trotskyism exists or not is the 'conditional' denial and the psychological explanation of Trotskyism. This virtuous and unprincipled psychological viewpoint, which manifests itself mainly in an effort to avoid a clear declaration, takes approximately the following form:

No Trotskyism exists in the form of a complete, self-contained system; indeed, a lack of system is typical of Trotsky's utterances in these discussions. The motive for these utterances must be sought mainly in Trotsky's personality, in his psychological makeup, namely that he does not understand how to choose the moment for his actions, etc., etc. For this reason, there is no Trotskyism but merely individual errors by Trotsky, at best temporary deviations from the Bolshevik line. Trotsky is at root a Bolshevik, a revolutionary, the organiser of victory, etc.

Every worker who only knows the history of the Russian Revolution in passing, and even then only in the form of myths, can easily succumb to this view.

This virtuous and unprincipled position must be countered in the following way:

1. Trotskyism is in no way a complete, self-contained system of principles but precisely the opposite. Trotskyism is in fact an absence of system. But just as in Hamlet, 'Though this be madness, yet there is method in't', so in Trotskyism's absence of system there is a system. In the realm of theory and principle, in the realm of practical politics, this 'system' means eclecticism, Menshevism. There is no exception to this, even if the current pulls the ship of politics with irresistible force in a revolutionary (meaning a Bolshevik) direction, even without the compass of theory.

2. So Trotsky's deviations are not deviations from the Bolshevik political line, but – insofar as there have been deviations in Trotsky's political career – they have been deviations from a line that was antithetical to Bolshevism, contrary to Bolshevism.

Any psychological explanation which seeks to remove the objective and principled basis from this struggle, in which the Communist Party of Russia is defending its, and the Communist International's, greatest treasure, Leninism, is an unprincipled attempt at a cover-up; it is, so to speak, Trotskyism itself!

What is Trotskyism?

Our thesis, which will be proven below, is that Trotskyism is a system which is distinct from Bolshevism, is contrary to it, and is hostile to it. We must therefore try to outline the framework of this system, to describe its theoretical principles and the tactical and organisational practices informed by them. It is not enough in this regard to project Trotsky's political career with all its zigzags onto the historical screen of the Russian workers' movement. It is necessary to identify the core of this position, to divide its teachings into groups of theoretical, tactical, and organisational questions of the revolution.

This first attempt can of course not make any claim to completeness. But we believe that it can show that Trotsky, in the midst of a Marxist-Leninist party, had of necessity to take the path we have described above: the path from internal party discussion to discussion with the party to discussion in opposition to the party.

Trotsky's Attitude to Revolutionary Marxism

Trotsky is generally regarded as an orthodox Marxist. And he has come – even if with diversions – ‘fighting’, as he himself says,⁵ – to Leninism and to Marxism at the stage of imperialism and the proletarian revolution.

As far as ‘orthodoxy’ is concerned, there is no lack of it – in words – even among the Marxist centrists of Western Europe and the Menshevik wing of Russian Social Democracy which can be counted with them. As is well-known, this group of Russian Mensheviks (Martov, etc.) always wanted to decide the struggle against the Bolsheviks by invoking quotations. As history shows, the Mensheviks, along with their whole baggage of quotations, have sailed into the waters of counter-revolution. Trotsky has held himself up in the Russian workers’ movement, as he has said many times, as the representative of progressive ‘European Marxism’, but even after his conversion to Bolshevism he was incapable of bringing his particular position into line with Bolshevism, namely with revolutionary Marxism. Some fundamental difference must exist therefore between the Marxism of the so-called Marxist ‘centre’ and the wing of the Russian Mensheviks that belongs to it, which is also Trotsky’s Marxism, and the Marxism of the Bolsheviks. This fundamental difference lies in the method. The method of revolutionary Marxism, of Leninism, is the materialist dialectic. This method of dialectical logic means analysing the object of inquiry in toto, in all its connections. It means examining the development in objective ‘self-movement’ [*Selbstbewegung*], it says that there is ‘no abstract truth, that truth is always concrete’,⁶ and thus demands strict unity of theory and practice.

This method is the basis of Leninism. It has restored Marxism as a revolutionary teaching. Trotsky’s method is a contrast to this: eclecticism, the exact opposite or, at best, the falsification of the dialectic. To make clear from the very outset what kind of method this is, we offer a quotation which is not often singled out but is typical of Trotsky:

‘The Marxist tactic was the chemical bond between the reformist and revolutionary tendencies of the proletarian struggle. Liquidationism and Pravdism (namely the Bolshevism concentrated at that time in the Petersburg *Pravda*, B.K.) undermine Marxism’s struggle for influence over the workers by eliminating at one end worker reformism and at the other end vulgar, simplified “revolutionism”’ (*Bor’ba*, July 1914).⁷

5 Trotsky 1965a, p. 57.

6 Lenin 1965j, p. 368.

7 ‘Bor’ba za edinstvo i marksistskii tsentr’, *Bor’ba*, no. 7–8, July 1914, p. 5.

In the above example, Trotsky's eclectic method stands in classically stark contrast to the Marxist-Leninist dialectic, and not only in methodological terms but also in terms of all the political consequences of this contrast. For Trotsky, the contrast between Bolshevism and Menshevism is not the contrast between revolution and counter-revolution, which cannot be equated under any circumstances. Trotsky was quite unable to see the irreconcilable in this contrast, because he did not try at all to analyse the differences in their historical development under the existing conditions, and in their connections on the basis of the Russian Revolution. Instead, he proceeded from an abstract, fundamentally false, yet for all that very glossy, formulation, according to which Marxism 'chemically' binds the reformist and the revolutionary trends. The chemist's formula is prepared in the following way: take 'revolutionism' (not the revolutionary method!) from the Bolsheviks and 'worker reformism' from the liquidators, mix them together and you get Marxist tactics on the basis of the semi-feudal, semi-capitalist society of tsarist Russia. And all that in July 1914, when the mass strikes of the Petersburg workers almost turned into an armed uprising.

That is eclecticism in its classic form, in its dead, bloodless emptiness. For its sake Marxism had to be falsified, for its sake revolutionary Marxism had to be transformed into a mixture of the reformist and the revolutionary spirit. Indeed, an 'orthodox Marxism' whose chemical elements are 'worker reformism' and 'simplified revolutionism'. Or did Trotsky perhaps assume that ultimately his alchemy would succeed in 'reconciling' these two elements into a new 'compound'?

One might object here that Trotsky has already long since recognised his mistake, that in his aforementioned letter to Ol'minskii he admitted making a mistake in his evaluation of the two factions of the Russian workers' movement: the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks. On the face of it, that is quite correct. But this same method is implicit in Trotsky's statement in this very letter: 'I consider my evaluation of the motive forces of the revolution to have been indisputably correct'.⁸

From this follows:

1. In Trotsky's eyes, Marxism is not a revolutionary method but a mixture of reformism and revolutionary theory. It is not about reform and revolution, but about reformism and revolutionary method. The Bolsheviks were never against reforms as a by-product of revolution, as a means of consolidating the

8 'The Chkheidze Controversy', Document 14, p. 424.

revolution; they were however mortal enemies of reformism as a contrast to the revolutionary method.

2. What Trotsky in his way calls Marxism is Trotskyism itself: a peculiar, eclectic mix of partially reformist, partially revolutionary elements.

3. The method, which underpins Trotsky's political, tactical, and organisational views, is therefore not the method of revolutionary Marxism, of Leninism, but a contrary method.

Mixing political elements that do not belong together is just one side of Trotskyism. The other side is no less antithetical to Marxism and Leninism: it is the mechanical separation of phenomena that belong together, the denial of the unity and the general validity of the Marxist method (the dialectic).

'Marxism is an integral world outlook'.⁹ The Marxist method is applicable – even for those who futilely want to question that applicability – to all manifestations of social life. What is the attitude of the 'Marxist' military author Trotsky to this method? Trotsky denies that Marxism is applicable to military questions. Marxism is apparently applicable to politics but not to 'the theory of war' and has nothing at all to do with military questions. At best, it can be applied to the history of war. Trotsky maintains that Engels was not a Marxist on military questions but a 'military analyst'. And, as such, in his analysis of military questions, he started from 'the independent domain of the highest war art'.¹⁰

In Trotsky's opinion, the task of Marxism in military questions is precisely to keep Marxism away from military questions. Trotsky continues to repeat the dialectical formula of Clausewitz: 'War is a continuation of politics [...] by other means'.¹¹ Meanwhile, he mechanically or 'chemically' separates war not only from politics but raises doubts as to whether war is a social phenomenon at all. Otherwise it makes no sense why Trotsky considers it out of the question for Marxism to be applicable to military questions. The mechanical separation of elements that belong together is continued in a vulgarly mechanical linking of the things which have been mechanically separated in this way, and in this way Trotsky wants to supplant dialectical unity. Instead of applying Marxism to military questions, he offers the lesson of the interaction of politics and 'pure, independent, military knowledge' as the means of training the red commanders.

Of course, this eclectic method had its effect on Trotsky's military strategies as well. This interests us for the time being only in relation to Trotskyism's

⁹ Possibly a reference to Lenin 1963r, p. 23.

¹⁰ Trotsky 1944, p. 138.

¹¹ Trotsky 1944, p. 140.

attitude to Marxism, and on the basis of this we can supplement our three earlier conclusions with the following observations:

4. Trotskyism tears a breach between theory and practice, in contrast to the Marxist thesis of the dialectical unity of theory and practice.
5. The method of Trotskyism is a variant, a particular type of centrism that floats between Bolshevism and Menshevism and has not advanced along the road towards Bolshevism.

The Revolutionary Methodology of Trotskyism

Trotskyism's position on Marxism of course had consequences for the specific, revolutionary theory, for the specific, revolutionary method of Trotskyism. This eclectic method of Trotskyism created the theory of permanent revolution. What is the theory of permanent revolution?

The theory of permanent revolution is Trotsky's blueprint for the revolution according to which the Russian Revolution of 1905 'should' have developed, and according to which, as Trotsky and his supporters claim, the revolution of 1917 did in fact develop. According to this theory (take note: in 1905 and in Russia!), the revolution should have unfolded in the following way:

1. The real starting point is 9 January 1905. A broad revolutionary movement of the workers. Revolutionary unrest and an attempt to form a peasant alliance (*Bauernbund*). Tsarist power becomes weaker, but the workers' party is also still organisationally weak. The bourgeoisie is already betraying the revolution. Trotsky, who is in the Menshevik camp opposing the organisational principles and plans developed by the Bolsheviks for the revolution, and opposing everything to do with the technical preparation of the revolution, fights the bitterest struggle, abandons his Menshevik comrades, and describes the most urgent task of the revolution as follows:

'Every individual, spontaneous action of the masses must be saturated with the idea of the need for simultaneous, Russia-wide action. Each committee must, without delay, create a new organ, a "military" organ. This organ will grow rapidly and will, in the days of the action, subordinate all the others to it'.¹²

2. In the midst of the peasant unrest, Trotsky discovers that the proletariat stands alone, in the whole of Russia, without allies. It can rely neither on the peasantry, nor on the urban petty bourgeoisie, nor on the intellectuals (1905 and in Russia!). These strata can play no serious role in the revolution.

12 T., 'Politicheskiiia pis'ma', *Iskra* 93, 17 March 1905, p. 3.

3. For this reason, the revolution is declared permanent, i.e. the proletariat advances victoriously from the armed insurrection, and the provisional revolutionary government will be a government of the Social Democratic Workers' Party, i.e. the armed insurrection will end therefore with the proletarian dictatorship. The government of the working class will be forced to march on to socialism.

Meanwhile, Trotsky discovered the peasantry and promised the 'intervention of the proletariat in the organization of agriculture', which of course 'will begin not by binding scattered labourers to scattered patches of land, but with the exploitation of large estates by the State or the communes'.¹³

4. And finally, according to the blueprint of the permanent revolution – after the peasantry has abandoned the proletariat and also after the world reactionary forces have turned against revolutionary Russia – the dictatorship of the Russian proletariat can be saved only by staking everything on one card, by tying its own fate to the European socialist revolution (in 1906!) and calling on the proletariat of Europe: Workers of the World Unite!

That is the theory, the blueprint of permanent revolution, about which Trotsky has repeatedly written until very recently that he sees no reason to retract it, and that it forms the basis of the politics of the Communist Party of Russia since 1917.

This theory is quite 'leftist', and it seems as if Trotsky has not only leaped out of Menshevism in a single bound, but has vaulted over the heads of the Bolsheviks to the most extreme left of the revolutionary workers' movement. The Bolsheviks' demand was namely much more modest. Not a socialist workers' government and proletarian dictatorship, but a provisional government and a democratic dictatorship of the workers and peasants. That was the slogan of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, and the immediate goal was to make sure that the bourgeois revolution was indeed achieved. Not an immediate social revolution on a European scale, as Trotsky's blueprint promised, but a much more modest perspective, as described by Lenin in 1905:

'Given the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, we will mobilise scores of millions of the urban and rural poor (the idea here is of the Red Army! В.К.), and we will make the Russian proletarian revolution a prelude to the proletarian revolution in Europe'.¹⁴

¹³ Trotsky 1965b, p. 236.

¹⁴ Lenin 1962c, p. 303. Lenin's original is slightly different from Kun's iteration: 'given the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship, we will mobilise scores of millions of the urban

Furthermore, it must be noted that one of the most important, fundamental differences between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks on the motive force of the revolution was whether the peasantry or the liberal bourgeoisie was the fraternal ally of the proletariat.

Trotsky, who left the Mensheviks but did not yet join the Bolsheviks, created his 'permanent theory' in his usual eclectic way so that – as Lenin said – 'from the Bolsheviks Trotsky's original theory has borrowed their call for a decisive proletarian revolutionary struggle and for the conquest of political power by the proletariat, while from the Mensheviks it has borrowed "repudiation" of the peasantry's role'.¹⁵

Once again we have here the eclectic form of a 'chemical bond' which produces a completely unrealistic, dead plan on paper only.

The absence of any investigation into the concrete, revolutionary motive forces has turned the 'call for a decisive proletarian revolutionary struggle', borrowed from the Bolsheviks, into an empty phrase. Neglect of the peasantry, made up largely of some proletarian and some independent economic elements, as a revolutionary motive force, deprives the Russian Revolution of one of its most significant components. In Trotsky's hands, the proletarian dictatorship becomes an empty, propagandistic phrase, because, without the peasantry as comrades-in-arms, the proletariat, this narrow (in 1905 it was even narrower than in 1917) stratum of the Russian people, is in a position neither to take power nor to maintain it. Robbed of its broad social base, the socialist workers' government would not only have been unable 'to put collectivism on the agenda', it would have been able to do little more in fact than die 'a beautiful death' with its revolutionary cry to the dilatory proletariat of Europe: Proletarians of all Countries, Unite! In certain instances, such a heroic death can be of use to the revolutionary cause. We doubt though whether it would have been useful in this actual instance.¹⁶

and rural poor, and we will make the Russian political revolution the prelude to the socialist revolution in Europe'.

15 Lenin 1964ff, p. 419.

16 The blueprint of the permanent revolution has put down deep roots in the consciousness of some communists in the West, of course, although many did not have a clear sense of its meaning. It is a fact that the only book which describes the history of the revolution of 1905 in German and French is Trotsky's *1905*, a book which is positively saturated with the 'spirit' of the 'permanent revolution'. It will be necessary to make thorough use of the twentieth anniversary of this revolution to present the communists of the West with a Leninist elucidation of the history of the revolution [original footnote].

This blueprint for the development of the Russian Revolution, which Trotsky came up with in collaboration with Parvus, or rather Parvus with Trotsky, and which many would like to claim as the basis of the revolutionary strategy of 1917, was both in 1905 and in 1917 an eclectic, bloodless blueprint totally divorced from social reality. Neither in 1905 nor in 1917 and beyond did the Russian Revolution develop according to this moribund timetable from an eclectic brain.

The achievement of the proletarian dictatorship and its adaptation to international revolution might also create the superficial impression that the revolution in 1917 had indeed been 'permanent' in Trotsky's sense.

Examination of the internal forces and the developmental stages of the revolution makes it clear at once that in reality the development of the October Revolution ran counter to all the theses of permanent revolution, because

1. the October overthrow did not occur in such a way that the peasantry abandoned the working class; on the contrary, its occurred because of the armed alliance of the working class and the peasantry;
2. the Russian proletariat, therefore, despite all the efforts of international reaction and the postponement of the international proletarian revolution, was able to maintain power. The armed alliance of the working class and the peasantry however was also complemented by an economic alliance.

The strategy of defeat espoused by Trotsky did not 'conform fully with the position of our party since 1917'. On the contrary! On all questions of principle, the party's policy since the October victory was to fight against Trotskyism and against his position on the peasant question, and it signified a real victory of Bolshevism over Trotskyism. Trotsky therefore clung frantically to his old theory and dragged his entire methodology into the Bolshevik Party. This is how, through all the discussions since Brest-Litovsk to the present day, he became the champion of Menshevism, the embodiment of petty-bourgeois, Menshevik threats.

Trotsky pursued the theory of permanent revolution in the Bolshevik Party. The main stages of this theory in its application to the problems of the proletarian dictatorship were:

1. Brest-Litovsk. German imperialism stood unbowed, the German proletariat unable to deliver a final blow due to its lack of well-constructed, revolutionary organisations. The Russian peasant 'was voting with his feet on the question of freedom'; he was deserting the front. The party had two directions: under Lenin's leadership, the majority takes account of the mood of the peasantry and of the overwhelming majority of the working class and of the actual state of power, and declares itself in favour of peace in order to procure a breathing space for the Russian proletariat, which will allow it to wait for the victory

of the international revolution. The Left Communists, together with Trotsky, grasp on to the idea of a revolutionary war and giddily want to throw the force of the Russian Revolution, of the proletarian dictatorship, 'into the scales of the class struggle of the entire capitalist world'.¹⁷ (Trotsky recommended this in 1906 when he was writing about the results and prospects of the Russian Revolution).

Later, Trotsky dropped the plan for a revolutionary war and retreated to a new, eclectic formula: 'Neither war nor peace!'¹⁸ From the Left Communists he retained the neglect of the social class structure of the country, the mood of the peasantry, while from Lenin's Bolshevism he retained recognition of the power of international imperialism. Trotsky's opposition led to worse peace terms and extensive capitulation to German imperialism. If his eclectic phrase had prevailed, the result would have been: continuation of the imperialist offensive, no breathing space, no solution of the land question in the interests of the peasantry; and in this way the international revolution would have suffered a decisive defeat with the suppression of the Russian proletariat. This 'Brest strategy' is a direct continuation and further development of the theory of permanent revolution.

2. The method by which Trotsky came up with the theory of permanent revolution also brought later benefits. The trade union discussion was triggered by Trotsky at a time when the peasantry was spontaneously demanding the abolition of the war communist measures that were impeding the development of the productive forces. The alliance of the proletariat and the peasantry had not merely become weaker, it was almost dissolving. The mood of the peasantry stood in the way of the worker masses in the towns, with which it was in close contact. A strike wave followed, and there were noisy demands for bread. The so-called 'Workers' Opposition' made the syndicalist demand that the management of production be handed over to the trade unions. Trotsky however did not remain deaf to the demand for bread. He concluded that production must be increased to satisfy this demand. But he did not see that war communism was constraining the productive forces of agriculture, and that without releasing these constraints, it was impossible to tackle the issue of developing industrial production.

Moreover, Trotsky wanted to put the management of production into the hands of the trade unions, just like the Workers' Opposition which tended

¹⁷ Trotsky 1965b, p. 247.

¹⁸ Cf. 'We declare we end the war but do not sign a peace', Trotsky wrote to Lenin from Brest-Litovsk in January 1918 (quoted in Wheeler-Bennett 1956, p. 186).

towards syndicalism. He believed that the trade unions just had to be 'shaken up' first. A militarily organised state apparatus had to be formed from the mass organisations of the workers. To this end, the old Bolshevik trade-union cadres, who had the trust of the masses, had to be replaced from above by people with 'military-administrative' experience. This was Trotsky's prescription on the eve of the New Economic Policy.¹⁹

This eclectic construction was again missing the peasantry as one of the immediately crucial factors of the social structure of the Soviet state. The peasantry was also missing indirectly as a factor influencing the worker masses who were socially connected with the peasantry. The stratified structure of the working class was also absent. It was the same old formula: in the interest of building socialism, the demand for the development of productive forces and work discipline was taken from Bolshevik policies, while the disregard for the stratified structure of the peasantry and the working class was taken from Menshevism. Add to this a dose of syndicalism and also the idea that the management of production should be placed in the hands of the trade unions. This is all mixed together so that elements that do not belong together mingle, and you end up with Trotskyism on the ladder of development of the proletarian dictatorship just as war communism is in decline in the weeks before the New Economic Policy.

Had Lenin and the old Bolshevik guard not stopped us from accepting this formula, the Menshevik elements of Trotskyism would have prevailed: the dissolution of the alliance with the peasantry, a split in the working class, and enormous bitterness around the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Another element characterising the revolutionary methodology of Trotskyism (as a continuation of the theory of permanent revolution) is the equally empty and dangerous demand for a 'dictatorship of industry' in 1922 which

19 On this occasion, it might be interesting to note that these ideas of Trotsky's on the trade union discussion were not his original ideas but really stemmed from Parvus, the father of the permanent revolution. Parvus wrote the following already in 1906: 'If the proletariat falls under state power, then it will obviously only truly accept the trade union interest in the state interest, and the activity of the trade union will consequently be formed by the activity of the state' (*Sozialismus und soziale Revolution*) [Parvus 1910, p. 24].

'If the army association, with its strict centralisation and subordination of individual parts, still seems to the political parties to be an unattainable ideal, the trade unions go further and can themselves be seen as the model of an organisation of the kind demanded by the development of a modern army. For they possess ... pure properties which seem to the modern army commanders to be as desirable as they are unattainable' (*Die Sozialdemokratie und der Parlamentarismus*) [original footnote]. [Parvus 1908, pp. 36–7].

ignored the economic and class structure of the Soviet state no less than the role of the peasant economy.

What is the consequence of this already classically eclectic method in the realm of politics?

Lenin answered this question during the trade union discussion in the following manner:

'The transmission belts from the motors to the machines are damaged'.²⁰

This is why the transitions are missing in Trotsky.

'Down with the Tsar, Up with the Government of the Workers!'²¹ went the slogan of Trotskyism, devised by Parvus in 1905 as the theory of permanent revolution emerged.

'Long live the revolutionary workers' government!', Trotsky repeated on 20 March 1917 as the only 'concrete, positive' slogan, and demanded the direct seizure of power,²² while in his theses of 4 April, Lenin was still speaking of 'patient explanation' as one of the next tasks.²³ In 'The Lessons of October', Trotsky asserts that this slogan corresponds to Lenin's slogans. Not a trace!

'The most important thing is that we set the date of the revolution, that the technical preparation takes place according to a definite calendar date'.²⁴ This is Trotsky's watchword in September 1923 when the storm of the German revolution was approaching. He said this shortly after he labelled as putschists anyone who was not inclined to swear that the long-term prospects of the European revolution was the only valid option.

Omitting the transitions in such situations means ignoring eventually an entire class (the peasantry), and eventually a party like the German Social Democratic party (the left wing of the bourgeoisie), and this is simply a natural consequence of Trotskyism's revolutionary strategy. 'It is not enough to be a revolutionary and an adherent of socialism', said Lenin.

You must be able at each particular moment to find the particular link in the chain which you must grasp with all your might in order to hold the whole chain and to prepare firmly for the transition to the next link; the order of the links, their form, the manner in which they are linked

20 Lenin 1966j, p. 192.

21 I have been unable to locate the source for this quotation.

22 Trotskii 1924q, p. 16.

23 Lenin 1964d, p. 23. The full quotation is: 'a patient, systematic, and persistent *explanation*'.

24 This does not appear to be a direct quotation, but a paraphrase of Trotsky's views as expressed in the following article: Trotzki 1923, pp. 1309–10.

together, the way they differ from each other in the historical chain of events, are not as simple and not as meaningless as those in an ordinary chain made by a smith.²⁵

As we have seen, Trotsky has not managed to find this particular link. He keeps to one path, then he takes another path; one time he seizes a method that is already in the past, another time he seizes one that exists in some uncertain future. He usually replaces the missing link with dramatic revelations of his personal will, with individualistic subtleties which cause many people to look for crude psychological explanations for Trotsky's politics. There is not the slightest reason to do this. The explanation is contained in the theory, the method of Trotskyism. This theory is exactly the opposite of the method expressed in Lenin's above quotation – a classic summary of the dialectical method. The contrast between these two systems, Leninism and Trotskyism, is rooted in the contrast of two methods which are mutually exclusive: the dialectic and the eclectic.

Trotskyism's Approach to Tactical and Organisational Questions

The Trotskyist approach has perfected the great 'trick' of chemically binding reformism and revolutionary theory in 'revolutionary Marxism', and made the peasant class disappear from among the motive forces of the Russian Revolution. Nor did it let Trotsky off the hook on tactical and organisational questions. Although Trotsky retreated much more energetically from this issue than from the issue of revolutionary method and strategy, he was not able to retract everything related to the evaluation of the Menshevik and Bolshevik factions: he could not separate himself from Trotskyism in this area, and he was as incapable of assimilating the tactical and organisational methods of Leninism as he was its revolutionary strategy.

Nothing is more of a given. Both Marxism and Leninism are such methodologically integrated systems that they cannot tolerate any kind of eclectic interludes. Either one embraces them totally and becomes a Marxist and a Leninist, or else the 'Marxist' corner, which one wanted to seize in order to draw down the whole Marxist garb, eludes the grasp – and the fundamental opposition is revealed in all its nakedness. This was also how Trotsky proceeded when he wanted to modify the Leninist tactical and organisational principles

25 Lenin 1965a, p. 274.

according to his own revolutionary theory, failing to notice that Leninism is not just a collection of tactical and organisational principles but is an integrated method, the historical and logical completion of Marxism. In his more recent statements, Trotsky has not taken such a clear and unequivocal position on the tactical and organisational principles of Leninism as he has on the question of revolutionary method. On the latter he has proclaimed the authority of Trotskyism directly and clearly. On the other issues (the tactical and organisational questions), he made his evasive manoeuvres and, in so doing, he wanted to raise Trotskyism to the level of Bolshevik tactics not only for the present (1917) but also for the past. At the time of the discussion prior to the Thirteenth Party Congress, Trotsky stated the following about the tactical questions of the party:

'If we now examine our party in its revolutionary past and in its post-October past, its fundamental and valuable tactical advantage must be seen as its ability to get its bearings quickly and to make a "sharp turn in tactics, to rearm, and to apply new methods, in short to have a politics of sharp turns"'.²⁶

It would sound vulgar to say that Trotsky summed up Leninist tactics and organisation as a 'politics of sharp turns' only because he wanted to justify his past, and even more so when this formulation sought to replace Leninism with Trotskyism and not only in relation to the past. Let us now compare what Trotsky wrote, with what we have quoted from Lenin in the above chain analogy. It becomes immediately clear that the politics of Bolshevism is quite different from the way Trotsky characterises it. It is not necessary to discuss in detail how carefully Lenin sought the specific in his analyses in each concrete situation, how carefully he paid attention to the fact that every change in the objective situation was reflected in corresponding tactical transitions in the policies of the party. (This was expressed particularly clearly in his theses of 4 April 1917, in his position on the Provisional Government, on the revolutionary defence of the fatherland, and on those Soviets with Menshevik and the Socialist Revolutionary majorities. The tactical component of the theses of 4 April provides precisely the tactics of the transition).²⁷

It is merely necessary to analyse the aforementioned Trotskyist thesis in all of its eclectic essence:

1. The ability to re-orientate itself at short notice is indeed one of the advantages of the Bolshevik Party, of Leninism, precisely because of its methodology, its dialectical logic.

26 I am unable to trace the precise quotation, although in April 1923 Trotsky referred to the need for a 'politics of sharp turns' in Trotsky 1941b, pp. 111–14.

27 Lenin 1964d.

2. After Leninism re-orientates itself at short notice, it then generally finds the appropriate new methods and means for the new situation and generally recognises in a timely fashion the need for the transition. Similarly, it ascertains the type and manner of the transition.

3. A sharp turn in politics is therefore not the rule in Bolshevism but rather the exception that only occurs if the party has not found its way quickly enough or in good enough time, and if it has been somewhat surprised by events. (The turn to the New Economic Policy might to a certain degree be considered a sharp turn. The party perhaps failed to notice quickly enough that a change had occurred in the objective situation. Once it did notice it, it was prevented from carrying out the necessary measures, the transitional measures, by the trade union discussion initiated by Trotsky, which recommended, with a persistence deserving of a better cause, honing the measures of war communism instead of bringing it to an end).

4. Everything Trotsky wrote about the excellent tactical capabilities in the Bolshevik Party is to a great degree correct. It is correct that the party understood how to re-orientate itself at short notice; it is correct that the party was able to make a sharp change in its tactics, to change its weapons, to apply new methods. Incorrect, however, is Trotsky's conclusion from all of this, namely that the politics of the party is a politics of sharp turns.

5. Trotsky's conclusion is wrong simply because this is not the politics of Bolshevism but of Trotskyism, which, instead of analysing the objective conditions both before and after the revolution, has defined its politics by lurching to and fro between the views of the various factions. For this reason, he was constantly being surprised by events, and in every instance he had to make a sharp turn.

And let us ask the question again: Where does Trotsky get this wonderful ability to draw incorrect conclusions from a series of correct factual findings? We again reject the psychological explanation and stay with the ideological explanation. We refer once again to his method, his eclecticism which separates what belongs together and combines what does not belong together. The application of this method to the party, its tactics, and its organisation leads to the same conclusions as their application to the realm of theory, of revolutionary strategy: to the lesson of permanent revolution and to its logical continuation, the Brest policy of Trotskyism, to his position on the trade union discussion, to the demand for a dictatorship of industry, etc.

This approach to tactics and organisation is manifest in two important examples:

1. A false, anti-Leninist evaluation of the role of the party in the struggle for the dictatorship.

2. A false evaluation of the internal structure and of all the internal problems of the party in the manner of the Marxist 'centre'.

The Practice of the Politics of 'Sharp Turns'

In theoretical and historical terms, these features of Trotskyism (in our analysis of the system of Trotskyism we are intentionally not speaking of individual mistakes because these are not individual mistakes but rather component parts of a political course, the system of Trotskyism) follow from the way in which the role of spontaneity and consciousness is evaluated. It is well-known that Lenin – while not denying the role and importance of spontaneity in the worker movement – said that the task of the revolutionary workers' party was to introduce revolutionary consciousness into the working class and to represent this revolutionary consciousness as an organised vanguard which, 'instead of dragging at the tail-end of events'²⁸ (according to Lenin, 'tailism' [*khvostizm*] is a policy of following the tail in the tactical sense),²⁹ precedes it and leads it. This view underpins the system of organisational principles of Bolshevism as well: centralisation, discipline, unity, etc. 'It does not dissolve in the broad worker masses'³⁰ ('tailism' in organisational questions), but is suitable for connecting with the masses and can even in a certain sense be melded with them.

And Trotskyism? We are ignoring here everything that Trotsky through these teachings over time imposed (in the form of invective) on the Bolsheviks and (in the form of praise) on the Mensheviks, who did not recognise these teachings. We are interested here only in the manner in which Trotskyism positioned itself on these questions.

Since the beginning of the dispute between the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions on tactical and organisational questions, Trotsky accommodated himself to 'West European Marxism', namely to those parties which at least in their rhetoric preserved something of a revolutionary attitude but which had basic-

28 Lenin 1962f, p. 216.

29 For various usages of 'tailism', see Lenin 1962g, pp. 148–57.

30 I am unable to find the source of this precise quotation. It seems to be related to the following quotation: 'Danger may be said to lie in a sudden influx of large numbers of non-Social-Democrats into the Party. If that occurred, the Party would be dissolved among the masses, it would cease to be the conscious vanguard of its class, its role would be reduced to that of a tail' (Lenin 1965p, p. 31).

ally abandoned any revolutionary will. Accordingly he rejected the theory of the role of the proletarian vanguard, which was based on a correct evaluation of the function of 'consciousness', as follows:

So, if the 'Economists' do not lead the proletariat, because they are merely tail-ending it, the 'political' elements (the Bolsheviks, В.К.) do no better for the good reason that they themselves are carrying out duties in its place. If the 'Economists' are disarmed in the face of the enormity of their task, contenting themselves with the humble role of marching at the tail-end of history, the 'politicos' on the other hand, have resolved the problem by trying to transform history into their own tail.³¹

The party – the organisation of the class-conscious vanguard – cannot decide until history has decided, until the advancing spontaneous movement reaches the same level as the party. Without a decision though, there can be no uniform will, no organisational preparation for action which, in Trotsky's view by the way, was not at all necessary in 1904 (several months before the outbreak of the revolution!), for, as he wrote:

As a whole our task at the present time lies in the field of political tactics. We, the so-called 'minority' are not creating independent organisational tasks for ourselves; we think that the most urgent of these tasks is imposed on us in the process of the political struggle itself. In this specific meaning we are in fact 'opportunists on organisational questions'. It must only be kept in mind that the rigour on organisational questions which is opposed to our opportunism is nothing but the other side of the coin of political myopia.³²

It is from this, from this total disregard for the objective conditions (the party is a vanguard because it is the most far-sighted and perceptive), from the denial of the role of the party as vanguard and, essentially the same thing, from the denial of the role of organisation, that Trotskyism deduces the need for a politics of sharp turns. Barely a year after he wrote the above statements, Trotsky wrote the following after the events of 9 (22) January 1905:

'Every individual, spontaneous action of the masses must be saturated with the idea of the need for simultaneous, Russia-wide action. Each committee

31 Trotsky 1980b, pp. 76–7.

32 Trotsky 1980b, p. 117.

must, without delay, create a new organ, a "military" organ. This organ will grow rapidly and will, in the days of the action, subordinate all the others to it'.³³

The main priority is now no longer in the realm of 'political tactics', no longer even in the realm of political organisation, but rather in the realm of military organisation.

This is indeed a 'sharp turn'. It has nothing to do with Bolshevik tactics which have nothing in common with this aimless stumbling to and fro, this typical feature of Trotskyism.

However, those who maintain that what has been proven here with Trotsky's authority is a part of history need to be reminded about Trotsky's position on the German events of 1923, which Trotsky himself wrote about in 'The Lessons of October'. In short, this position was as follows:

1. At the Fourth World Congress of the Communist International at the end of autumn 1922 and afterwards, Trotsky predicted the onset of the democratic-pacifist era which would take over from fascism and imperialism in the style of Poincaré. This prophecy has in general come to pass. Nor does it represent a major contradiction with this view at the time. On the prospect of the democratic-pacifist era, Trotsky was also describing the immediate tasks of the Communists. It cannot with the best of wills be said that he reckoned with the occupation of the Ruhr region when deciding on these tasks. Of course, he took just as little account of the economic and political situation pertaining in Germany in the meantime, and so he failed to consider that in Germany they were preparing for an immediate struggle for power and also that the neighbouring countries would have to be taking measures in support of it. As Trotsky saw them, the tasks were in small part tactical and in large part propagandistic in nature.

2. In the winter of 1923, the Ruhr region was occupied. Trotsky took as little note of the revolutionary meaning and consequences of this fact as did Brandler and his comrades. Trotsky did not notice this link between fascism and the democratic-pacifist era, or he at least did not deem it necessary to change anything in light of the occupation of the Ruhr region about the immediate prospects he laid out at the Fourth Congress.

3. The meeting of the Expanded Executive of the Communist International in spring 1923. The representatives from the German party did not bring up for discussion the idea that there should be any tactical and organisational preparations to make use of the developing revolutionary situation. Nor was any such initiative forthcoming from Trotsky. Zinoviev signalled – although not

33 T., 'Politicheskii pis'ma', *Iskra* 93, 17 March 1905, p. 3.

with the necessary firmness – the shift in the situation and also the need for a corresponding tactical shift. The slogan of the worker and peasant government was accepted as a slogan corresponding to this tactical shift.

4. The Cuno strike in August. Trotsky was silent. Even later he said not a single word against his factional comrades who in Prussia had called off the anti-fascist demonstration of the German party. And then in September, the 'sharp turn'. Political preparation was now of secondary importance, prime place was now given to technical military preparation! Revolution by deadline and planned according to the calendar!

Even sharper than this sharp turn was simply the fact that after the 'German October' Trotsky, with every fibre of his being and together with Radek and the German rightists, defended the Brandler tactics and strove to blame the failure of the German revolution exclusively and solely on the objective situation in which, he believed, the German Right had pursued the only possible and correct tactics. It is hard to imagine a sharper turn than that, although Trotsky, speaking about the experiences of the October Revolution, now declares that the error of the Communist International caused the German party to miss an opportunity of world-historical significance, and that a German revolution is therefore now off the table for a long time to come. The two latter sharp turns are at present of no interest to us and to the correctness of our thesis. (The fact that in the factional battle Trotsky has become entangled in, the confusion of his own different views is irrelevant from this point of view). On the basis of the above statements, we want to make the following observations about Trotskyism's tactical method:

1. To Trotskyism, political situations appear as isolated tactical and organisational periods.

2. Accordingly, it understands the role of the party in different ways but continually underestimates it. During the 'tactical' period, the role of the party is only that of an agitator which issues slogans and mediates. During the 'organisational' period, the party is all-powerful.

In 1905, Trotsky wanted to make every stirring of the working class into the starting point for a Russia-wide action. In November, he wanted all technical military measures to be planned according to the calendar, and by 9 November at the latest by a party that barely possessed a half-functioning, illegal apparatus. But Trotsky also underestimated the role of the party in the 'organisational' period because he wanted to subordinate political to military leadership. (To avoid misunderstandings, we also want to point out in particular that Trotsky was not saying that during an armed insurrection everything had to be subordinated to the military interests of the insurrection, but rather that 'all remaining organs' of the party had to be subordinated to the 'military organ').

3. The politics of 'sharp turns' in Trotskyism can therefore be traced back to the fact that Trotsky sees the need for the revolution to be consciously led and organised only when the waves of the spontaneous movement are cresting. In those periods when the revolutionary wave is ebbing and when the spontaneous movements lack the power (no counter-revolutionary periods) to make Trotsky see the party as the vanguard, leader and organiser, he always bows (in a truly Menshevik way) to spontaneity and wants to treat the party from the standpoint of spontaneity. During these periods Trotsky drags it along behind the spontaneous movements. He is not at their apex, making them conscious and organising them. Only new revolutionary waves can bear him up again and push him on to consistent, revolutionary battle! For him, this would of course mean a new sharp turn.

4. The tactic of Trotskyism is therefore a Menshevik tactic so long as the wave of revolution has not reached a certain point, and only then – and only in a limited way – does it become a revolutionary tactic.

Later on we will see how this peculiar mix of 'tailism' and revolution pulled Trotsky into the camp of the Bolsheviks before the October Revolution, and how he became an excellent agitator of the revolution.

Centrism on Organisational Questions

The politics of 'sharp turns' led to the conclusion that Trotsky is envisaging such a system for the organisational construction of the party, a system that easily and painlessly permits such sharp turns, namely a flexible organisational form that is suited to the masses and that guarantees the ideological unity of the party, its homogeneous social composition, the continuity of its leadership, its strict centralisation, and its discipline.

If this were the case, it would be logical both from the standpoint of the politics of Trotskyism and – in fact – from the standpoint of Leninism. But Lenin made precisely these demands vis-à-vis the organisation of the conscious vanguard of the proletariat. He did so in order that the party, as the highest organisational form of the proletarian class, would be capable of rapidly re-orientating itself for the preparation and leadership of the revolution, of forming a quick and uniform will, of carrying out this will without delay and unanimously, of being manoeuvrable. This organisational design would be a party that has those tactical 'properties' listed by Trotsky as the 'fundamental and valuable properties' of the party and from which he has cobbled together in his eclectic way the politics of 'sharp turns'. Such an organisation is capable, if necessary, of making a sharp turn.

On the other hand, in such an organisation a tactical leadership can also develop which renders the politics of 'sharp turns' superfluous. Only such an organisation can, over and above the spontaneity of the workers' movement, raise itself to the level of consciousness of the vanguard. It understands how to guide the party at the head of the masses when the revolution is on the upswing, and it understands how to retreat in timely fashion, and if necessary to retreat without panic and in orderly fashion if it is the last combat unit.

Trotsky is never disappointed by his own eclecticism. Every one of his statements on organisational questions throughout his entire career proves this.

1. With regard to the social composition of the party, his primary concern, at the start of the struggle between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, was how the secondary school students [*Mittelschüler*] would be able to get into the workers' party if Lenin's organisational statute were adopted, and he came out in support of the 'loose' organisational form. At the time of the party discussion that preceded the Thirteenth Party Congress, his watchword was the school-age youth rather than the workers as the 'barometer' of the party.

2. With regard to the ideological unity of the party, his position immediately before the war was as follows:

There can only be true unity when the party has a backbone in addition to its two wings, a Marxist centre that has overcome the centrifugal tendencies of the right and left wing and has become the pillar of public opinion in the party and of party discipline. German Social Democracy would never have been able to maintain its unity if its opportunistic wing (Bernstein, David, etc.) had stood face-to-face with the ultra-left wing (!) (R. Luxemburg, i.a.). The Marxist centre of Bebel and Kautsky is the pillar of unity and discipline in the party of the German proletariat.

Bor'ba, July 1914, no. 7–8³⁴

And so, in place of solidarity and ideological unity we have introduced wings, factions as institutions under the ideological, tactical, and organisational hegemony of the 'Marxist centre'. Trotsky's centrist view has not come to light in this manner by chance. Much later, during the war in March 1916, he said the following about the tasks of the Internationalists:

'The undisputed goal of our present intellectual and organisational struggle is the purging [*Säuberung*] of social nationalism [*Sozialnationalismus*] from the International'.³⁵

34 Trotsky 1914, pp. 7–8.

35 I am unable to find the source of this precise quotation, although this sentiment is

Not a word about the Marxist centre from whose true face the mask had already slipped. At the same time though, he described the politics of the Bolshevik organ *Sotsialdemokrat*, which was led by Lenin and Zinoviev, as 'schismatic at any cost' and condemned it. (This and similar articles were collected by Trotsky in 1923 under the title *Vorbereitung der Kommunistischen Internationale!!*).³⁶

On the same organisational tactic, he had reverted in the previous year's party discussion to the demand for the freedom to form factions and groupings.

3. 'Tailism' in the question of centralisation, 'tailism' in questions of organisation, is also a feature of Trotskyism.

In 1904, Trotsky wrote:

'In the internal politics of the Party these methods lead, as we shall see below, to the Party organisation "substituting" itself for the Party, the Central Committee substituting itself for the Party organisation, and finally a "dictator" substituting himself for the Central Committee; on the other hand, this leads the committees to supply an orientation – and to change it – while "the people keep silent"'.³⁷

In 1924, he wrote:

'The approach of the events in Germany set the party a-quiver. Precisely at this moment it appeared with particular sharpness that the party was living, as it were, on two storeys: the upper storey, where things are decided, and the lower storey, where all you do is learn of the decisions'.³⁸

This is a classic example of how the elements of a whole can be eclectically dismantled.

We do not want to pile up any more the quotations about the continued internal issues of the party (the question of the continuity of leadership and of party generations, the party apparatus, etc.).

Trotsky's position on organisational questions can likewise be traced to his views on spontaneity and consciousness and on the 'tailism' that derives from them. The dialectical link between aim, means, and method is missing from the well-known system of Trotskyism. Setting revolutionary goals is followed up by a revolutionary strategy which lacks the forces needed to make the revolution a reality. In terms of accomplishing the revolution, he either completely ignores the means of organisationally preparing for and leading it, leaving this

contained in the following piece which appeared in *Nashe slovo* from February to March 1916: L. Trotskii, 'Sotsial-patriotizm v Rossii', in Trotskii 1923c, pp. 151–71.

36 I have not been able to find a record of this work.

37 Trotsky 1980b, p. 77.

38 Trotsky 1965a, p. 13.

to spontaneity, to the instincts of the working class, or else he transplants the organisational principles from foreign soil onto Russian soil, without taking into consideration the objective differences. If in the course of the revolution Trotsky personally deems that the time is ripe for a conscious, guiding role, then this consciousness that Trotskyism takes into the revolution is not the consciousness of the party, it has not emerged from the party and with the party, it is not the sum of the party's experiences, and it has not fashioned an ideology out of these experiences. For this reason the elements of consciousness in Trotskyism give the impression of abstract idealism, even if Trotsky claims to be a materialist.

On the organisational question of the party, Trotskyism also denies the party and its role, and the 'super-administration', as Lenin characterises Trotsky's statesman-like method, is but a consequence of this denial. Trotsky directed furious attacks against the party apparatus. These attacks, however, were based only on the fact that Trotsky, denying the role of the party, reduced the role of the party to an 'apparatus', to an apparatus which, in order to realise an abstract consciousness, sometimes served a self-fulfilling idea. That is how he wanted to transform the broad mass organisations of the workers, the trade unions, and how he would also transform the party if the collective and concrete consciousness of the party were to be seduced by such an idea.

The Sharp Turn Before October

Someone might still say after all this: if we concede that Trotskyism is an eclectic method which is antithetical to the dialectical method of Marxism-Leninism, and that in terms of revolutionary strategy this eclectic method is little more than revolutionary rhetoric, that it denies the tactical and organisational role of the party and offers a policy of Menshevik 'tailism', and its entire political orientation is a relic of centrism in the Communist International, then how can we explain the fact that in 1905 and 1917 Trotsky was nonetheless one of the leading figures in the revolution?

We should understand here again that the explanation does not lie outside of ideology, not in the psychology of the individual. Nothing would be cruder than to make Trotsky's 'revolutionary temperament' the answer to the question. That would parallel the approach of the virtuous centrists of the old Second International who wanted to ascribe the contrast between the revisionists and the left radicals to 'differences in temperature [*Temperaturunterschiede*]'.

Trotsky was brought to the forefront of the revolution by the same factor, namely the peculiar, eclectic method of Trotskyism that during the counter-

revolutionary period at the time of liquidationism had made him not the leader but rather the literary water-carrier of Menshevism. His method, and especially his position on the issue of spontaneity and consciousness, on the question of the role of the party and the resultant 'tailism' on tactical and organisational questions, are what brought Trotsky into the Bolshevik Party and to the summit of the revolution.

We have seen that the methods of Trotskyism on the question of spontaneity and consciousness led to the conclusion that the party 'should not carry out the tasks of the proletariat'.³⁹ In other words, the party should not be a conscious vanguard that decides, acts, and organises on questions of the revolution until the spontaneous mass movement itself has achieved even that minimum degree of consciousness which, through the revolution, has put the struggle for power on the agenda. For Trotsky and Trotskyism this period means the predominance of reformist elements; in terms of method it means subordination to spontaneity; in terms of tactics it means dropping revolutionary slogans (petition campaign); and in terms of organisation it means liquidating the party.

The role of the conscious vanguard, the time for the party's conscious leadership of revolutionary organisational activity, comes when the spontaneous movements of the workers grow, when the revolutionary wave is seen to rise. Subjectively this means the turbulent development of consciousness in those proletarian masses which are outside of the party. Those masses, which lagged far behind the party and which at times have turned against it (against the current!), and with which the party, despite all its efforts, despite intervening on everyday questions, was not able to maintain sufficient contacts, those masses are now close followers of the party. The difference between the consciousness of the vanguard and the consciousness of the masses has diminished measurably.

In theoretical terms this period means for Trotsky that the revolutionary elements are dominant in the 'chemical bond' of Marxism, and in terms of method it means the balancing of spontaneity and consciousness; tactically it means that through this method, on the back of the spontaneous, revolutionary movement, the difference between the masses and the vanguard has evened out. The revolutionary method drives the organisational part of the movement, the emphasis on the military revolutionary role of the party, even to the top. The reduction of the distance between the conscious state of the spontaneous mass

39 I am unable to find the source of this quotation, although it appears to refer to Trotsky's theory of substitutionism (see Trotsky 1980b, esp. pp. 72–9).

movement and the consciousness of the leading party enables Trotsky – under the influence of the pressure of the masses – to leap into the embodiment of the leading consciousness, the Bolshevik Party.

The ‘tailism’ that made a Menshevik of Trotsky in his anti-revolutionary period drove him into the camp of the Bolsheviks during the revolutionary period, and, together with the masses, to the forefront of the revolution. Thus did Trotsky become the tribune of the revolution, the eloquent agitator of the Bolshevik Party who in time of revolution conveyed to the roused masses what the Bolshevik Party under Lenin’s leadership had created over decades of collective, conscious work.

Without Trotsky and in Spite of Trotskyism

Of course, Trotsky’s Trotskyism did not die when the spontaneous, mass movement drove Trotsky to the Bolsheviks (but not to Bolshevism!). For Trotsky it was only momentarily suppressed by revolutionary events. (After the revolution, just as little as before the revolution, there was no mass phenomenon in the workers’ movement which could be called Trotskyism). This was shown immediately by Trotsky’s position on all the significant questions of the revolution, on its tactical and organisational questions.

For precisely this reason, it is methodologically wrong to speak of Trotsky’s ‘deviations’ in connection with the various discussions of the party. If we consider Trotsky’s political career from the perspective of the system of Trotskyism – and only in this way can it be correctly evaluated – it is not a deviation in the commonly understood sense of that term: Brest-Litovsk, the position in the trade union discussion, the demand for the dictatorship of industry, the petty-bourgeois position on the internal problems of the party during the most recent party discussion. Trotsky’s entry into the Bolshevik Party is his deviation, judging by the position he took on the issue of liquidationism, by his denial of the party as the bearer of the consciousness of the proletariat. It is a deviation from a particular line, whose basic feature is an eclectic conception, antithetical to Marxism, of all the questions of the revolution, in short it is a form of centrism corresponding to the external and internal conditions of the Russian workers’ movement.

“The Lessons of October” and Trotskyism¹

A. Bubnov

1 What Comrade Trotsky's Book is About

At our party meetings we are obliged to speak about comrade Trotsky's new book *1917* and the introduction to the first part, 'The Lessons of October', because this book is not simply a literary work, – it represents a political declaration with internal party significance. A feature of this book is that comrade Trotsky uses it to launch an extremely pointed offensive. Against what and against whom has comrade Trotsky gone onto the attack in this book? This first question deserves a precise answer.

Comrade Trotsky, as we know very well – is a skillful man of letters, and in order to grasp the fundamental elements in his new book, it must be read very closely. Comrade Trotsky addresses a whole series of issues which are connected intimately with the era of the October Revolution.

To begin with, he characterises the disagreements that occurred in 1917 as 'very profound and not at all accidental' (see v. III, *1917*, part I, p. XII).² To convey the depth of these disagreements, comrade Trotsky says the following:

If that policy (i.e. the policy he blames on 'a certain number of leading figures in our own party',³ A.B.) had prevailed, the revolution would have developed without our party, and, in the final analysis, we would have achieved only a worker and peasant insurrection without any guidance from the party. In other words, we would have repeated the July Days on a huge scale, i.e. not as an episode but as a catastrophe. It is perfectly obvious that the direct outcome of that catastrophe would have been the destruction of the party. This shows how deep the disagreements were at the time.

p. XVIII⁴

1 A. Bubnov, 'Uroki Oktiabria' i Trotskizm', in *Za Leninizm. Sbornik Statei* 1925, pp. 210–40.

2 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 86.

3 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 92.

4 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 92.

And later on, comrade Trotsky moves to the present. He addresses the failures which we experienced in 1923 – failures in Bulgaria and in Germany. Analysing the failure of the German insurrection, comrade Trotsky says: ‘we saw here a classic demonstration of how to let slip a perfectly exceptional revolutionary situation of world historical significance’ (p. xiv).⁵

Let’s continue. ‘To be sure’, comrade Trotsky continues, ‘the study of the October Revolution alone will not in itself bring victory in other countries; but a situation may arise where all the conditions for a revolution are in place, with the exception of a far-sighted and resolute party leadership’ (p. xiv).⁶

Everything I have quoted here from comrade Trotsky’s book reveals a series of conclusions: firstly, in October 1917 there were such disagreements in our ranks that if the erroneous position had prevailed we would have had a ‘catastrophe’ or ‘collapse’; secondly, in 1923 there was a ‘moment’ when the Comintern, in comrade Trotsky’s view, let slip a ‘perfectly exceptional revolutionary situation’;⁷ and thirdly, in this connection he states that ‘all the conditions for a revolution’ were in place ‘with the exception of a far-sighted and resolute party leadership’.⁸ Here comrade Trotsky – let us be frank about this – is using a system of innuendos, allusions, and semi-allusions to beat what is called the ‘party leadership’; he levels his accusations at the ‘leadership’ of our party and the Comintern. Recently comrade Trotsky has come out more than once against the leading circles of our party, and here we see the kind of attempt which, as will be clear later, is of a different order even when compared to his book *The New Course* which was published about six months ago.

It is well-known that during the October days comrade Zinov’ev and comrade Kamenev, who have now joined the leading nucleus of our Central Committee and the leading nucleus of the Comintern, made a mistake at that time, which, as even comrade Lenin said, we in the party ‘are now loth to recall’.⁹ And with his talk of the ‘study of October’ comrade Trotsky is in fact launching an attack, going onto the offensive against the leading Bolshevik cadres, against the Central Committee, against our party leadership.

In his book comrade Trotsky says: ‘It would be pathetic to turn them (i.e. those October disagreements. A.B.) now, several years later, into weapons to

5 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

6 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 88.

7 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 87.

8 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 88.

9 Lenin 1966c, p. 385.

attack those who at that time had gone astray’ (see p. XII).¹⁰ Indeed, under the banner of studying the October Revolution, comrade Trotsky has again taken up his task of discrediting Lenin’s closest disciples [*ucheniki*]. If we recall several of comrade Trotsky’s writings relating to last year’s discussion, then it will be quite clear that here again comrade Trotsky is continuing his old course. I will permit myself to mention very briefly what comrade Trotsky wrote at that time. At that time Trotsky struck out at our Bolshevik Old Guard, saying that the Old Guard was in danger of degeneration and referring to the example of the leaders of the Second International. In his pamphlet, *The New Course*, he wrote the following: ‘It [the Old Guard] may ossify and become unwittingly the most consummate expression of bureaucratism’ (see p. 80).¹¹

I must say here that this mode of discrediting Lenin’s closest associates, this course of fighting against the leaders of Bolshevism – is a course of action familiar to comrade Trotsky from before he had joined our party, when he stood outside the ranks of Bolshevism, and when he was primarily occupied by this very same task, which to our greatest chagrin he is resuming in his new book.

In his book he portrays matters in such a way that any member, especially any young member, of the party gets a completely distorted idea of the position of the Central Committee in October, and of comrade Lenin’s role at that time, and of comrade Trotsky’s role, etc. Comrade Trotsky is acting not only against the CC and the party leadership – he incorrectly characterises here the state of the party in the pre-October and October period.

At great historical turning points, writes comrade Trotsky, ‘the party is consumed by the crisis, and the movement passes it by – on the way to defeat’ (see p. xv).¹² And this happens ‘if the turn is too sharp or too sudden, and if the preceding period has seen the leading bodies of the party filled with too many elements of inertia and conservatism, the party will turn out to be incapable of fulfilling its leadership role at that most critical moment for which it has been preparing itself for years, even decades’ (see pp. XIV–XV).¹³

Proceeding from this assumption, comrade Trotsky castigates the party with this characterisation: ‘Everything in the party that remains indecisive, sceptical, conciliatory, capitulatory – Menshevik – opposes the insurrection, looks for theories to justify its opposition, and finds them ready-made in yesterday’s opportunistic opponents. We shall see this phenomenon again’ (see p. XVI).¹⁴

¹⁰ Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 86–7.

¹¹ Trotsky 1965a, p. 92.

¹² Trotsky, Document 1, p. 89.

¹³ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 89.

¹⁴ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 90.

And of course even a small child can see where all these ‘characterisations’, so liberally scattered around comrade Trotsky’s introduction ‘The Lessons of October’, are leading.

But comrade Trotsky is not only dealing with this question in his book – the question of the party elite, of the CC, of the party leadership, linking all of this to the present day – he also addresses one extremely important subject which in its time was the subject of discussions and arguments through decades of development of the revolutionary movement in Russia, namely the question of the nature of revolution and its connection with October. Comrade Trotsky says this: ‘To engage now, several years after October, in an evaluation of various viewpoints about revolution in general and the Russian revolution in particular, and to bypass the experience of 1917 while doing it, would be a fruitless, academic exercise, and would not be a Marxist political analysis at all’ (see p. XVI).¹⁵

Trotsky therefore intended with the experience of the October Revolution to return once again to a ‘test of views on revolution’.¹⁶

Earlier, there were three viewpoints on revolution. One which we defended, another defended by the Mensheviks, and a third defended by comrade Trotsky. And comrade Trotsky wants to use the experience of October to again ‘test’ these three viewpoints. The Mensheviks preached that the Russian Revolution was a bourgeois revolution, that the bourgeoisie made it, and that we only had the prospect of a parliamentary bourgeois-democratic republic. Our viewpoint was different: at that time we advanced the idea of a revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Lenin wrote:

Like everything else in the world, the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry has a past and a future. Its past is autocracy, serfdom, monarchy and privilege. In the struggle against this past, in the struggle against counter-revolution, a ‘single will’ of the proletariat and the peasantry is possible, for here there is unity of interests. Its future is the struggle against private property, the struggle of the wage worker against the employer, the struggle for socialism. Here singleness of will is impossible. Here our path lies not from autocracy to a republic, but from a petty-bourgeois democratic republic to socialism.

Vol. VI, p. 359¹⁷

15 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 90.

16 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 90.

17 Lenin 1962d, pp. 84–5.

Including a quotation in his ‘Letter on Tactics’, he added (in April 1917) that he did not count on the ‘immediate transformation of our revolution into a socialist revolution’ (see v. XIV, part 1, p. 35).¹⁸ Comrade Lenin himself understood this and taught us that the development of the peasant movement must not be skipped, that the proletariat can raise itself from the bourgeois-democratic to the socialist revolution (from capitalism to socialism) only by raising up the peasantry, not by cutting itself off from it but by leading the millions of the peasant masses. This was, and is, the essence of Leninist strategy and tactics. Comrade Trotsky adopted the position of ‘permanent revolution’.

Comrade Trotsky’s position, as comrade Lenin said many times, suffered from the mistake of underestimating the role of the peasantry; in pushing the slogan of the socialist dictatorship of the working class, it skipped the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, skipped the peasantry, underestimated its role. In his new book, comrade Trotsky is therefore taking on one of the most important themes, and if he veers back to his old position he will again find himself in the position of coming out against Leninism and incorrectly interpreting the entire experience of the October Revolution. And this is what happened with comrade Trotsky. A typical feature of Trotsky’s new book is that he held to his old, Trotskyist position and stubbornly went onto the offensive. I will permit myself for the most part to concentrate on comrade Trotsky’s way of thinking here.

Comrade Trotsky said that ‘even before 1905, Lenin captured the uniqueness of the Russian revolution in the formula of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry. This formulation, as later events showed, can only be taken to mean a stage on the path to the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat that is supported by the peasantry’.¹⁹ This is the first formulation. Later, comrade Trotsky offers a second formulation in which he casts doubt on the correctness of Lenin’s statement that after the February Revolution the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry ‘has already become a reality, has become a fact’.²⁰

After the February Revolution, comrade Lenin wrote about this clearly and precisely in April (see v. XIV, part 1, pp. 28–9).²¹ In defiance of this, comrade

18 Lenin 1964b, p. 50. Lenin is quoting Kamenev here.

19 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 91.

20 I am unable to find the precise quotation, although it is close to the following quotation: “The revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry” has *already* become a reality ... the “revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry” already accomplished in reality’ (Lenin 1964b, pp. 44–5).

21 Lenin 1964b, pp. 42–54.

Trotsky wrote: 'a democratic worker-peasant coalition could take shape only as an immature form that had not advanced to real power. It was a tendency, not a fact'.²²

Comrade Lenin said in April that the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry in Russia had become a fact.

Comrade Trotsky casts doubt on this. And later he says the following (the third formulation): 'At the April Conference the formula of the democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry fell apart both theoretically and politically and produced two hostile viewpoints' (see p. xxxi).²³ These are the three formulations we have from comrade Trotsky on this most important question of the nature of the revolution.

Clearly comrade Trotsky was reconsidering Lenin's viewpoint on the nature of the revolution.

According to Trotsky it follows, first, that the Leninist formula could be taken to mean only 'a stage on the path to the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat';²⁴ second, that, notwithstanding Lenin's opinion, this formula had not become a reality; and, third, that at the April Conference this formula 'fell apart both theoretically and politically'.²⁵

That is how Trotsky in 1924 wrote off the Leninist idea about the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. And he did this as a way of defending his own viewpoint on the nature of revolution, i.e. defending the formula of permanent revolution. Here again comrade Trotsky returns to his old way of thinking, he returns to the time when he was not in the ranks of our party but was fighting against it. He is not just returning to the distant past here but also to his recent past, i.e. to last year's discussion. And again we must remind ourselves what comrade Trotsky was writing during last year's discussion. He wrote: 'As to the theory of the permanent revolution, I see no reason to renounce what I wrote on this subject in 1904, 1905, 1906, and later' (see *Novyi kurs*, p. 50). And further on: 'Thus, the idea of the permanent revolution coincides entirely with the fundamental strategical line of Bolshevism'. And, appealing to the young comrades 'who do not weary of studying', he said they 'will do well to read for themselves, pencil in hand, the works of those days, for and against the permanent revolution, and to try to get from these works the threads that link them with the October Revolution, which is not so

22 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 95.

23 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 104.

24 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 91.

25 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 104.

difficult’ (see *Novyi kurs*, p. 52).²⁶ You can see what comrade Trotsky is trying to achieve here. He wants young comrades to re-examine the polemic between Lenin and Trotsky about the permanent revolution and draw a direct line from Trotsky to October.

This work is hardly in the interests of the party for its goal is a re-examination of Leninism, i.e. it is against Leninism. Comrade Trotsky did this work in the past opposition. In his book, which we will discuss with you now, he continues this work.

From comrade Trotsky’s quite extensive introduction, I have drawn on only two themes: the party leadership and the nature of the revolution. These themes are not insignificant; they are most closely related to what is called Leninism. And we have seen that comrade Trotsky is continuing the work he was engaged in last year, i.e. he is endeavouring to rebuild Trotskyism and tear down Leninism. Every member of the party must understand this. As comrade Trotsky is not ceasing his activity, and as this work is a regurgitation [*otryzhka*] of what was typical for Trotsky when he was not yet a Bolshevik and often acted together with the Mensheviks against us and comrade Lenin, then this question acquires even greater significance and obliges us to remind our young comrades in particular about several facts from the history of our party.

2 How Trotsky Fought against Leninism

As comrade Trotsky is not repudiating his mistakes from last year’s discussion, as he is repeating not only his mistakes from last year but also those from the distant past when comrade Trotsky was not in the ranks of our party, we must now address those subjects which we have not addressed up to now, which we did not want to address, which we have avoided, but which must now be revealed to the party as clearly as possible.

Comrade Trotsky joined the RKP(b) in July 1917. Until then he was outside of the ranks of Bolshevism. It is not without interest to learn where comrade Trotsky was at that time. In Para. 41 of the political statute [*politicheskii ustav*] from 1922, we read:

Comrade Trotsky, Lev Davydovich, the chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic and People’s Commissar of Military and

²⁶ Trotsky 1965a, pp. 59–60, 61. The original quotations have the term ‘permanent revolution’ in quotation marks, although Bubnov removes these marks in his text.

Naval Affairs, appointed by the All-Russian CEC, has been the leader of the Red Army since 1918. Comrade Trotsky was born in 1874 in the village of Ianovka, Elisavetgrad region, Kherson province. As a young man, he joined the secret 'South Russian Union' [*Iuzhno-Russkii Soiuz*] in the town of Nikolaev. Here, comrade Trotsky was arrested. He spent about two and half years in prison and was then exiled to Siberia. During the 1905 revolution, comrade Trotsky was comrade chairman of the Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies. When the Soviet was arrested, comrade Trotsky was sent into exile for a second time, but escaped abroad. While abroad, comrade Trotsky continued to serve the working class.²⁷

Let's see how comrade Trotsky displayed his service to the working class at that time. Let's start a little before this period. It is well-known that at the Second Congress of the party in 1903 a split occurred between Menshevism and Bolshevism. Since then, and for many long years, Bolshevism, this genuinely revolutionary, proletarian party headed by comrade Lenin, tirelessly fought against each and every attempt to divert the working class from the true revolutionary path. Bolshevism had many enemies. For many years Menshevism and the SRS bore down on it. And not a few arrows were fired at our camp from comrade Trotsky's quiver as well. When at the Second Congress of the party in 1903 the argument flared up about para. 1 of the statute, i.e. about how the party of the working class should be built, and when comrade Lenin put forward his own plan for the organisation of the party, comrade Trotsky, who had been on Lenin's side prior to this, came out against him. In 1904, comrade Trotsky published the pamphlet *Our Political Tasks* in which he fiercely attacked the Bolsheviks and Lenin. In this pamphlet, he described the organisational methods of Bolshevism thus: 'In the internal politics of the Party these methods lead, as we shall see below, to the Party organisation "substituting" itself for the Party, the Central Committee substituting itself for the Party organisation, and finally the dictator substituting himself for the Central Committee; on the other hand, this leads the committees to supply an "orientation" – and to change it – while "the people keep silent"' (see L. Trotskii, *Nashi politicheskie zadachi*, Geneva, 1904, p. 54). We also read these lines about this 'dictatorship':

Really, no greater cynicism can be shown towards the richest ideological heritage of the proletariat than by Comrade Lenin! For him, Marxism

27 This refers to the political statute of the Red Army for 1922 (*Politicheskii ustav 1922*), although I have been unable to locate the edition containing this quotation.

is not a method of scientific analysis, a method imposing enormous theoretical responsibilities; it is a rag which you can trample underfoot if you want; a blank screen on which to project things larger than life and a pliant rule when the state of party consciousness has to be taken into account!

see p. 75

Comrade Trotsky also called Lenin ‘the head of the reactionary wing of our Party’ here, who sought ‘to define Social Democracy in a way which (in Trotsky’s opinion. A.B.) is a *theoretical attack against the class character of our Party*’ (L. Trotsky’s emphasis), adding: ‘Yes, a theoretical attack, no less dangerous than the critical ideas of a Bernstein’ (see p. 98).²⁸ At that time, comrade Trotsky did not understand the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat and did not grasp the significance of the party in establishing and maintaining this dictatorship. At that time, the Urals Bolsheviks, taking account of the experience of the Paris Commune of 1871, drew the conclusion that for victory the working class needed a ‘strong, authoritative [*vlastnyi*] organisation’.²⁹ Comrade Trotsky came out in the most decisive manner against this and wrote: ‘The authors of the document have the courage to declare openly that they see the dictatorship of the proletariat as a dictatorship over the proletariat: it is not the independent working class that has taken the fate of society into its hands, but rather a “strong, authoritative organisation”, ruling over the proletariat, and through it over society, guarantees the transition to socialism’ (see p. 102).³⁰ You can see how harshly comrade Trotsky is attacking the principles of Leninism. Later he made the following accusation against the Urals workers: ‘The Urals comrades are completely consistent in replacing the dictatorship of the proletariat with a dictatorship over the proletariat, the political rule of a class with the organizational rule over that class. But this is not the consistency of Marxists but of Jacobins or, as translated into “socialist” language, Blanquists ..., of course, with the original aroma of Urals culture’ (see p. 102).³¹ And moving on to Lenin, he accuses him of preparing himself a little spot in this system of the dictatorship over the working class. He writes:

28 Trotsky 1980b, p. 77, p. 104, p. 126. In the original, Trotsky places ‘critical’ in quotation marks, but Bubnov omits them.

29 L. D. Trotskii 1928, p. 199. This quotation appears in the original, but not in the English translation, which appears to have left untranslated the final ten pages.

30 L. D. Trotskii 1928, p. 200.

31 L. D. Trotskii 1928, p. 201.

Surely Lenin knows who is being readied for a central role in the system of Urals Social-Democratic Boulangisme? And surely he will protest against this abuse of the socialist party being introduced into the theory? He is silent. More than this: he is so eloquently silent on these questions that everyone thinks he is licking his lips [*predvkushaet*] and preening [*okhorashivaetsia*] internally.

see p. 106³²

That was how comrade Trotsky fought against Lenin and Bolshevism before the 1905 Revolution. In the 1905 Revolution, comrade Trotsky drew closer to Bolshevism but not so close as to constitute a genuine rapprochement. Meanwhile, during this period he also came up with his own theory of permanent revolution (see his 'Politicheskie pis'ma', 11 in no. 93 of 17 March 1905).³³

With the onset of the Reaction after the defeat of the 1905 Revolution, comrade Trotsky once again drew closer to, and then even allied himself with, the most dyed-in-the wool [*ot"iavlennyi*] Menshevism. We know that 1908–14 was the period when Menshevism turned into liquidationism. At that time, comrade Lenin characterised them as liquidators. He wrote: 'The liquidators are petty-bourgeois intellectuals, sent by the bourgeoisie to sow liberal corruption among the workers. The liquidators are traitors to Marxism and traitors to democracy'.³⁴ The liquidators were former Mensheviks who had given up on the revolution and had renounced the underground party, declaring that the pull of the revolutionary underground was a regrettable fact. They pursued a most ruthless and unconscionable struggle against the Bolsheviks. And at this time, comrade Trotsky in fact came so close to this 'betrayal of Marxism', to this 'betrayal of democracy', that he came together with them in a bloc. At this time, comrade Trotsky had begun to publish in Vienna his own newspaper called the *Rabochaia gazeta 'Pravda'* [*Workers' Newspaper 'The Truth'*]. He set out to unite all of the factions. He declared himself 'non-factional' but in fact supported the liquidators and fought against the Bolsheviks.

In 1912, comrade Trotsky joined the so-called 'August Bloc' and participated in the 1912 conference. And here it is interesting to bring in the testimony of Martov, with whom Trotsky was in the same camp at that time. In Martov's letter to Iu. Chatskii on 16 May 1912, we read:

32 L. D. Trotskii 1928, p. 207.

33 T., 'Politicheskiia pis'ma', *Iskra* 93, 17 March 1905, pp. 3–4.

34 Lenin 1963s, p. 162.

The force of circumstances forces Trotsky to take the Menshevik path despite his intended plan for some kind of ‘synthesis’ between historical Menshevism and historical Bolshevism. Because of this and because of the contradiction in his movement, noted by him in the plan, he has not only fallen into the camp of the ‘liquidationist bloc’, but is obliged to take the most ‘combative’ position vis-à-vis Lenin in it.

see *Pis'ma Aksel'roda i Martova*, v. I, 1924, p. 233³⁵

In 1913, a spat broke out between comrade Trotsky and the liquidators. He left the staff of collaborators on the liquidationist newspaper *Nasha zaria*. He wrote the following in a letter to the editorial board of this newspaper:

I would not in any way want to make a political demonstration with my departure. Therefore I am not requesting that you print this letter. But I strongly request that you publish it in the forthcoming booklet of lists of your collaborators, after having removed my name from it. It is not for this reason that I hope my departure from ‘N.z.’ is not described as a ‘break with liquidationism’, – essentially it means only that I do not want to take the responsibility for liquidationism as such, after the framework of party collaboration with liquidationism has been created.

ibid., p. 274. Trotsky's letter appeared on 7 February 1913³⁶

When *Pravda* appeared, Trotsky greeted it with the question why it had appropriated the name of his newspaper. In that article, he did not deny himself the satisfaction of characterising our party – a ‘Leninist circle’ in his words – as the ‘embodiment of factional reaction and of the willingness to split things apart’.³⁷ Then Trotsky set course for ‘European Social Democracy’. In the journal *Bor'ba* [*Struggle*] (1914), comrade Trotsky wrote: ‘As we set about pursuing our goals, we start from basic ideas formulated in August 1912. This means that on our historical agenda, above all else, is the task of actively rallying the Social-Democratic workers, regardless of their factional origins. This further means that we are not linking the fate of the workers’ movement with the fate of Bolshevism or Menshevism, Leninism or Liquidationism, taken in isolation.

35 *Pis'ma* 1924, p. 233.

36 *Pis'ma* 1924, p. 274, n. 6.

37 Redaktsiia rabochei gazety ‘Pravda’, ‘My zhdem otveta’, *Pravda* [Vienna], no. 25, 6 May 1912, p. 6. Trotsky also complained about the appropriation of his newspaper's name by the Bolsheviks in his letter to Chkheidze in April 1913 (*Lenin o Trotskom* 1925, pp. 217–19; ‘The Chkheidze Controversy’, Document 14, p. 421).

Experience tells us all too clearly that these lines do not diverge in practice, but, on the contrary, inevitably converge in the direction of European Social Democracy.’³⁸

During the war he once again zigzagged towards Bolshevism, but as half-heartedly as ever and in no way decisively. Trotsky himself wrote about this in the introduction to the first volume of ‘War and Revolution’ (in March 1919):

However, there were three points on which *Nasha slovo*, even after it had finally passed into the hands of the left wing of the editorial board, did not agree with *Sotsial-Demokrat*. These points concerned defeatism, the struggle for peace, and the nature of the forthcoming Russian revolution. *Nasha slovo* rejected defeatism. *Sotsial-Demokrat* rejected the slogan of the struggle for peace, fearing that it concealed pacifistic tendencies, and contrasted it with civil war. Finally, *Nashe slovo* took the position that our party should take power in the name of the socialist overthrow. *Sotsial-Demokrat* continued to take the position of a ‘democratic’ dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. The March Revolution ended these disagreements.

see p. 27³⁹

After the February Revolution, comrade Trotsky did not come over to the Bolsheviks immediately. He first joined the Interdistrict organisation [*mezhrayontsy*]. Comrade Eremeev, recalling how comrade Trotsky joined the editorial board of our newspaper *Pravda*, relates the following:

When comrade Trotsky returned from abroad, comrade Lenin was already in Leningrad, as were Zinoviev and Kamenev. At that time, work was concentrated in the editorial board of *Pravda*, which had been resurrected after the military defeat. And I remember very well when comrade Trotsky appeared. He arrived and he did not show up for just over two weeks, even though he was expected, as were some of us – I reminded comrade Kamenev about this yesterday, he was such an optimist that Trotsky would arrive and throw himself headlong into *Pravda* and say: I am yours. In fact, he did not join the editorial board of *Pravda* ... and did not join any organization at all, apart from the interdistrict organisation, which had some pull on him.

38 I have been unable to find this piece in *Bor’ba*.

39 Trotskii 1923b, vol. I, p. 27.

And later:

And when he arrived at the editorial board of *Pravda*, Lenin, Zinoviev and Kamenev were there. They closed the door – as if they had to have a serious talk. And the conversation was like when a gentleman arrives in a place he knows poorly and talks about the weather. Then Vladimir Il'ich laughed: 'Here we are talking about the weather'. They spoke like that, by the way, they spoke generally, but they never got down to business. After this, comrade Kamenev spoke with comrade Trotsky separately, and only then did he contribute his first article.⁴⁰

On the banner, which comrade Trotsky marched under for many years, was written: 'destroy the very principles of Leninism which are incompatible with the party political organisation of the workers' (see comrade Trotsky's letter to Chkheidze of 1 April 1913).⁴¹

Also typical of comrade Trotsky during this period was his attitude to Lenin, expressed in the following words: 'Lenin, that professional exploiter of all that is backward in the Russian labour movement' (see the same letter).⁴²

In his articles from the period of the previous discussion, comrade Trotsky wrote: 'Since I am obliged to speak of myself for a moment (i.e. comments of a biographical nature. A.B.), I will say that I do not consider the road by which I came to Leninism to be any less safe and reliable than the others. I came to Lenin fighting, but I came fully and all the way' (See *Novyi kurs*, p. 48).⁴³ Judge for yourself how 'safe' and 'reliable' was the path taken by Trotsky. Trotsky says that he came to Lenin fighting. First, he did not move but remained in one place, next to Mensheviks and Liquidators, and often together with them. Second, staying in the same place for a decade and a half, he fought incessant battles against Bolshevism and against Lenin. Trotsky writes that he came to Lenin fully and all the way. On the experience of this year, you can easily judge the accuracy of this statement.

40 I have been unable to locate the source of these quotations.

41 *Lenin o Trotskom* 1925, p. 218; 'The Chkheidze Controversy', Document 14, pp. 421–3.

42 *Lenin o Trotskom* 1925, p. 217; see 'The Chkheidze Controversy', Document 14, p. 421.

43 Trotsky 1965a, p. 57.

3 How Lenin Fought against Trotskyism

With this first historical note, I endeavoured to show how comrade Trotsky fought against Bolshevism and against Lenin for about a decade and a half. Now I will permit myself to discuss how Lenin fought against Trotsky and Trotskyism.

In his 1919 article 'The Constituent Assembly Elections and The Dictatorship of the Proletariat', comrade Lenin wrote:

One of the necessary conditions for preparing the proletariat for its victory is a long, stubborn and ruthless struggle against opportunism, reformism, social-chauvinism, and similar bourgeois influences and trends, which are inevitable, since the proletariat is operating in a capitalist environment. If there is no such struggle, if opportunism (and anarchism as well) in the working-class movement is not utterly defeated beforehand, there can be no dictatorship of the proletariat. Bolshevism would not have defeated the bourgeoisie in 1917–19 if before that, in 1903–17, it had not learned to defeat the Mensheviks, i.e., the opportunists, reformists, social-chauvinists, and ruthlessly expel them from the party of the proletarian vanguard.

v. xvi, p. 458⁴⁴

From 1903 to 1917, the Bolsheviks had to keep up a fierce struggle not only against Menshevism, Liquidationism, and Social Chauvinism but also against Trotskyism. Until now, there has been no need to recall this; but we have to speak about it now. And if we have to speak about it, then we must speak accurately and unequivocally, the whole truth, to the end. Bolshevism and Lenin often had to fight fiercely in the struggle against Trotskyism. If we consider everything that comrade Lenin wrote from 1903 to 1917, we can see throughout that comrade Lenin is fighting not only against Menshevism, Liquidationism, and Social Chauvinism, but also against Trotskyism. I will not go into this in too much detail. It is clear from the aforementioned that in his speeches, articles, and pamphlets comrade Lenin had to criticise Trotsky's position, to struggle against Trotskyism. We see this both during the period of liquidationism and during the years of the Reaction. We also see this during the war. Even at the Second Congress of the party, comrade Lenin spoke out against Trotsky who had supported para. 1 of the statute as formulated by Martov:

44 Lenin 1965q, p. 275. The phrase in brackets has been added by Bubnov.

Comrade Trotsky completely misinterpreted the main idea of my book, *What Is to Be Done?*, when he spoke about the party not being a conspiratorial organisation (many others too raised this objection). He forgot that in my book I propose a number of various types of organisations, from the most secret and most exclusive to comparatively broad and loose organisations. He forgot that the party must be only the vanguard, the leader of the vast masses of the working class, the whole (or nearly the whole) of which works ‘under the control and direction’ of the party organisations, but the whole of which does not and should not belong to a party.

Protokoly II s"ezda RSDRP, izd. ‘Priboi’, 1924, p. 231⁴⁵

But at the Second Congress, comrade Trotsky had not yet developed, if it can be put like that, his opportunistic waverings. It is even well-known that Riazanov called him ‘Lenin’s cudgel’ at this time.⁴⁶ All the zigzags, vacillations, and the flights that were so typical of Trotsky, are still in the future, in the period from 1904–17. The whole party should pick up volume XII, part 2, of comrade Lenin’s collected works, and there on pp. 462–3 read the summary description of Trotsky provided by comrade Lenin in May 1914.

The old participants in the Marxist movement in Russia know Trotsky very well, and there is no need to discuss him for their benefit. But the younger generation of workers do not know him, and it is therefore necessary to discuss him, for he is typical of all the five groups abroad, which, in fact, are also vacillating between the liquidators and the party.

In the days of the old *Iskra* (1901–03), these waverers, who flitted from the ‘Economists’ to the ‘Iskrists’ and back again, were dubbed ‘Tushino turncoats’ (the name given in the Troubled Times in Rus to fighting men who went over from one camp to another).

When we speak of liquidationism we speak of a definite ideological trend, which grew up in the course of many years, stems from ‘Menshevism’ and ‘Economism’ in the twenty years’ history of Marxism, and is connected with the policy and ideology of a definite class – the liberal bourgeoisie.

The only ground the ‘Tushino turncoats’ have for claiming that they stand above groups is that they ‘borrow’ their ideas from one group one day and from another the next day. Trotsky was an ardent ‘Iskrist’

45 Lenin 1961b, p. 502.

46 Lenin refers to this in Lenin 1964y, p. 346.

in 1901–03, and Ryazanov described his role at the Congress of 1903 as ‘Lenin’s cudgel’. At the end of 1903, Trotsky was an ardent Menshevik, i.e., he deserted from the *Iskrists* to the Economists. He said that ‘between the old *Iskra* and the new lies a gulf’. In 1904–05, he deserted the Mensheviks and occupied a vacillating position, now co-operating with Martynov (the ‘Economist’), now proclaiming his absurdly Left ‘permanent revolution’ theory. In 1906–07, he approached the Bolsheviks, and in the spring of 1907 he declared that he was in agreement with Rosa Luxemburg.

In the period of disintegration, after long ‘non-factional’ vacillation, he again went to the right, and in August 1912, he entered into a bloc with the liquidators. He has now deserted them again, although in substance he reiterates their shoddy ideas.

Such types are characteristic of the flotsam of past historical formations, of the time when the mass, working-class movement in Russia was still dormant, and when every group had ‘ample room’ in which to pose as a trend, group or faction, in short, as a ‘power’, negotiating amalgamation with others.

The younger generation of workers should know exactly whom they are dealing with, when individuals come before them with incredibly pretentious claims, unwilling absolutely to reckon with either the party decisions, which since 1908 have defined and established our attitude towards liquidationism, or with the experience of the present-day working-class movement in Russia, which has actually brought about the unity of the majority on the basis of full recognition of the aforesaid decisions.⁴⁷

Comrade Lenin was well aware that the most dangerous enemies within the workers’ movement were those who knew how to disguise the opportunistic content of their political line with revolutionary phrases. This is why comrade Lenin came back so often to Trotsky both from 1908–14 and from 1915–17. I will note here only a few of Trotsky’s traits pointed out by Lenin during the period from October 1916 to March 1917. In October 1916, Lenin wrote: ‘No matter what the subjective “good” intentions of Trotsky and Martov may be, their evasiveness objectively supports Russian social-imperialism’.⁴⁸ In February 1917, he offered this practical characterisation of Trotsky: ‘The name Trotsky means left-

47 Lenin 1964y, pp. 346–7. Bubnov has added quotation marks to the terms ‘Menshevism’ and ‘Economism’ here.

48 Lenin 1964ii, p. 360.

ist phrases and a bloc with the Right against the aims of the Left.⁴⁹ And finally he again warns the party after the February Revolution: ‘In my opinion, the main thing now is not be misled by stupid attempts at “unification” with the social patriots or, still more dangerous, with the vacillators like the organizing committee (of the Mensheviks), of Trotsky and Co., and to continue the work of our own party in a consistently international spirit.’⁵⁰

4 Trotsky’s Past Weighs on His Present

Having taken this quite lengthy sojourn through the history of the struggle between Trotskyism and Leninism, we can once again pick up comrade Trotsky’s third volume and take a closer look at the basic ideas of his ‘The Lessons of October’.

In this book comrade Trotsky again tries to repeat his old ideas. He sets himself the task of ‘studying the October Revolution ... both at the level of the party and of the entire International’. It is his desire that ‘the whole party, and especially its younger generations, must work step by step through the experience of October (p. XIII)’.⁵¹ It is a very great and a very important task; the problem comes when this study does not undertake the correct analysis, when the starting point is wrong, when the approach and criteria are incorrect. I mentioned at the outset that Trotsky has his own viewpoint on the nature of the revolution – the theory of ‘permanent revolution’. Comrade Lenin spoke out frequently against this theory. He warned the party many times about this theory, considering it to be incorrect and harmful. In his article, ‘On the Two Lines in the Revolution’, Lenin wrote:

This task (i.e. the task of explaining the relationship of the class in the forthcoming revolution. A.B.) is being wrongly tackled in *Nashe Slovo* by Trotsky, who is repeating his ‘original’ 1905 theory and refuses to give some thought to the reason why, in the course of ten years, life has been bypassing this splendid theory. From the Bolsheviks Trotsky’s original theory has borrowed their call for a decisive proletarian revolutionary struggle and for the conquest of political power by the proletariat, while

49 Lenin 1964ee, p. 387.

50 Lenin 1964ee, p. 402.

51 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 88.

from the Mensheviks it has borrowed 'repudiation' of the peasantry's role.

v. XIII, p. 213

And in conclusion he added: 'Trotsky is in fact helping the liberal-labour politicians in Russia, who by "repudiation" of the role of the peasantry understand a *refusal* to raise up the peasants for the revolution' (p. 214).⁵²

And already after the February Revolution, while arguing with Kamenev and defining the revolution as a 'transitional stage to socialism', comrade Lenin looked back at Trotsky's incorrect theory and wrote at the time: 'But are we not in danger of falling into subjectivism, of wanting to arrive at the socialist revolution by "skipping" the bourgeois-democratic revolution – which is not yet completed and has not yet exhausted the peasant movement? I might be incurring this danger if I said: "No Tsar, but a *workers'* government". But I did *not* say that, I said something else'.⁵³ And later: 'In my theses, I absolutely ensured myself against skipping over the peasant movement, which has not outlived itself, or the petty-bourgeois movement in general, against any *playing* at 'seizure of power' by a workers' government, against any kind of Blanquist adventurism; for I pointedly referred to the experience of the Paris Commune' (v. XIV, part 1, p. 32).⁵⁴

Comrade Lenin therefore repeatedly underlined his sharply negative attitude to the Trotskyist theory of permanent revolution. And if comrade Trotsky now inserts his old idea into the analysis of the October Revolution, then he is of course conveying to the young generation a pseudo-Leninism which will sharply diverge from and contradict Lenin's theories.

First of all, I must lay out exactly how comrade Trotsky posed this question about permanent revolution even after the October Revolution, and how this shows that comrade Trotsky did not part company with this idea until very recently.

On 12 March 1919, comrade Trotsky wrote the introduction to a collection of his articles interpreting the nature of the revolution (see *Itogi i perspektivy*. Izd. 'Sovetskii Mir', 1919). We can read the following in this introduction: 'The character of the Russian Revolution was the fundamental question in relation to which the various ideological trends and political organizations of the Russian revolutionary movement grouped themselves'.⁵⁵

52 Lenin 1964ff, p. 420.

53 Lenin 1964b, p. 48. Lenin is quoting Parvus with this slogan: see *Istoriia RKP(b)* 1927, p. 278.

54 Lenin 1964b, pp. 48–9.

55 Trotsky 1965b, p. 161.

What did he say here about the theory of permanent revolution?
He said the following:

Therefore, once having won power, the proletariat cannot keep within the limits of bourgeois democracy. It must adopt the tactics of permanent revolution, i.e. must destroy the barriers between the minimum and maximum programme of Social Democracy, go over to more and more radical social reforms and seek direct and immediate support in revolution in Western Europe.

TROTSKII, *Itogi i perspektivy*, p. 5⁵⁶

The reader can see how far this linear formula is from the deeply dialectical idea of Lenin about the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry in 1905 and from the idea of revolution as transitional to socialism in 1917.

And yet this, no more, no less, was written in March 1919!

And later in the same introduction, comrade Trotsky wrote:

In maintaining the standpoint of the permanent revolution during a period of 15 years, the author nevertheless fell into error in his estimation of the contending factions of the social-democratic movement. As both of them started out from the standpoint of bourgeois revolution, the author was of the opinion that the divergencies existing between them would not be so deep as to justify a split. At the same time, he hoped that the further course of events would clearly prove the weakness and insignificance of Russian bourgeois democracy, on the one hand, and on the other, the objective impossibility of the proletariat limiting itself to a democratic programme. This he thought would remove the ground from under factional differences.

TROTSKII, *Itogi i perspektivy*, p. 5⁵⁷

Not a word on the peasantry. A scant reference to ‘the weakness and insignificance of Russian bourgeois democracy’. And the statement of ‘the objective impossibility of the proletariat limiting itself to a democratic programme’. Again a linear formula, taking no real account of the uniqueness of the relationship of the classes in our revolution. And as a general conclusion from the

56 Trotsky 1965b, p. 163.

57 Ibid.

evaluation of the theory of permanent revolution, as carried out by the author of this theory in 1919, we read: 'The final test of a theory is experience. Irrefutable proof of our having correctly applied Marxist theory is given by the fact that the events in which we are now participating, and even our methods of participation in them, were foreseen in their fundamental lines some 15 years ago' (Trotskii, *Itogi i perspektivy*, p. 7).⁵⁸

In this way, in his introduction of 12 March 1919 comrade Trotsky in quite mild and cautious terms asserted the correctness of his old Trotskyist theory.

Also in March 1919, comrade Trotsky wrote the introduction for his collection of articles *Voina i revoliutsiia* (first edition in 1922, and second edition in 1924), where he described one of the disagreements between *Nashe slovo* and *Sotsial-Demokrat* during the imperialist war: '*Nashe slovo* took the position that our party should take power in the name of the socialist overthrow. *Sotsial-Demokrat* continued to take the position of a "democratic" dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry' (Trotskii, *Voina i revoliutsiia*, v. 1, 1924, p. 27). He added: 'The March Revolution ended these disagreements' (*ibid*).⁵⁹

And so two introductions were written almost simultaneously; in one, comrade Trotsky says that the events of 1917 were foreseen by him 15 years in advance, i.e. that the theory of permanent revolution was borne out (this cannot be understood in any other way), and the other introduction maintains that the March Revolution ended the disagreements between Lenin and Trotsky on the question of the nature of the revolution. The issue is expressed in an unclear, confused way. On the one hand, Trotsky's theory is somehow borne out, and on the other, the disagreements between him and Lenin come to an end. What did comrade Trotsky mean by this? How, according to him, did the disagreements come to an end? Whose position was thrown overboard by the course of events – Trotsky's or Lenin's? In the final analysis this has all been confused by these two introductions, written by comrade Trotsky almost simultaneously.

But let's go further. In 1922, two editions of comrade Trotsky's book *1905* appeared. In the introduction to the first edition (included in the second edition as well), we are told that the theory of 'permanent revolution' took shape in the author's mind 'in the interval between January 9 and the October strike of 1905',⁶⁰ and at that time comrade Trotsky came up with the precise

58 Trotsky 1965b, p. 164.

59 Trotskii 1923b, vol. 1, p. 27.

60 Trotsky 1972b, p. vi.

evaluation of his old theory – he already declared with utmost clarity that this analysis ‘has been entirely confirmed’.⁶¹

But he did not restrict himself to that. On p. 285, the statement that ‘anti-revolutionary aspects ... of Bolshevism’, which, Trotsky thought in the period of Reaction in Russia, ‘are likely to become a serious threat *only in the event of victory*’ (my emphasis. A.B.), carries a note to the present edition. This note reads as follows: ‘This threat, as we know, never materialized because, under the leadership of Comrade Lenin, the Bolsheviks changed their policy line on this most important matter (not without inner struggle) in the spring of 1917, that is, before the seizure of power’ (ibid).⁶²

Thus the ‘anti-revolutionary aspects ... of Bolshevism’ did not appear at the moment of revolutionary victory (i.e. in October 1917) because in the spring of that year, an ‘ideological rearmament’ of Bolshevism occurred.

What is this all really about? In the introduction to the collection of his articles written in March 1919, Trotsky said that his prescience fifteen years before 1917 was testament to the correctness of his application of ‘Marxist theory’ to the analysis of the character of the Russian Revolution.⁶³ In the introduction to Volume 1 of *Voina i revoliutsiia* written almost at the same time, Trotsky vaguely states that the March Revolution ‘ended’ the disagreement between Trotskyism and Leninism on the question of the nature of the revolution, but does not indicate who benefitted from its end, i.e. whose understanding was discarded by the course of events as incorrect, erroneous.

And in 1922, and in the introduction to 1905, comrade Trotsky also stated categorically that his analysis ‘*has been entirely confirmed*’ (my emphasis. A.B.), and in the note on p. 285 added that an ‘ideological rearmament of Bolshevism’ occurred.

Now think about the entire sequence of these inferences – what conclusion will you inevitably reach? You will reach the conclusion that comrade Trotsky not only did not repudiate his theory of ‘permanent revolution’, but on the contrary was stating that our party in spring 1917 had ideologically rearmed itself, i.e. that it discarded the Leninist weapons it already possessed and took up a weapon that Trotsky had at his disposal. That is the clear meaning of comrade Trotsky’s ‘introductions’ and ‘prefaces’ for 1919–22. It turns out that comrade Trotsky, on joining the party, not only did not repudiate his old theory of ‘permanent revolution’, but thinks that you and I discarded Leninist theory

61 Trotsky 1972b, p. vii.

62 Trotsky 1972b, pp. 316–17.

63 Trotsky 1965b, p. 164.

and adopted Trotsky's position. Apparently, Trotsky did not come to us; the party came to him. But that is not all. In 1924, comrade Trotsky published his new booklet *The New Course*, in which he stated: 'As to the theory of the "permanent revolution", I see no reason to renounce what I wrote on this subject in 1904, 1905, 1906, and later. To this day, I persist in considering that the thoughts I developed at that time are much closer, taken as a whole, to the genuine essence of Leninism than much of what a number of Bolsheviks wrote in those days' (Trotskii, *Novyi kurs*, p. 51).⁶⁴

And later: 'Thus, the idea of the permanent revolution coincides entirely with the fundamental strategical line of Bolshevism' (ibid).⁶⁵ This was already no longer about analysing the past (the distant or very recent past), but about the present – 'I see no reason to renounce what I wrote on this subject in 1904, 1905, 1906'.

You can see here that this is a completely different matter, that there are no longer any careful formulations, and not only an analysis of the past but combative, precise, sharp language from a person who is defending his own 'theory' for the present as well.

And now let's again pick up the book which came out six months after *The New Course* and is comrade Trotsky's most recent literary work. In this book he goes onto the attack even more resolutely. On p. 193, I showed that comrade Trotsky spoke out against a series of statements by comrade Lenin dealing with the most important question – the evaluation of the course of the revolutionary events. Trotsky once again comes out against Lenin on one of the most important of our theoretical issues. This is a return to the old, to the long-distant past.

And typically, when comrade Trotsky tries to offer an analysis of the concrete relations of the class forces, of the actual course of revolutionary events – he breaks with the Leninist formulation of the question as based in Leninist methodology. In the introduction to his third volume, he writes: 'Consequently, the period following the February overthrow can be seen in two ways: either as a period of consolidation, development or completion of the "democratic revolution", or as a period of preparation for the proletarian revolution. The former view was held not only by the Mensheviks and SRS, but also by a certain number of leading figures in our own party' (Trotskii, 1917, v. III, part 1, p. XVIII).⁶⁶ Therefore, when comrade Trotsky moved from critical observations

64 Trotsky 1965a, pp. 59–60.

65 Trotsky 1965a, p. 61.

66 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 92. Bubnov has moved the quotation marks from 'democratic' in the original to 'democratic revolution' here.

about Lenin's theories to a concrete analysis of the period after February 1917, he was formulating the issue in a way that was quite wrong and which broke completely with Leninist dialectics. Comrade Trotsky counterposed the process of completing the democratic revolution against the process of preparing the proletarian revolution.

This counterposing is a rejection of the dialectic; it is a rejection of Leninism. Comrade Lenin wrote about this in 1921 in his article ‘The Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution’:

Both the anarchists and the petty-bourgeois democrats (i.e., the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are the Russian counterparts of that international social type) have talked and are still talking an incredible lot of nonsense about the relation between the bourgeois-democratic revolution and the socialist (*that is*, proletarian) revolution. The last four years have proved to the hilt that our interpretation of Marxism on this point, and our estimate of the experience of former revolutions were correct. We have *consummated* the bourgeois-democratic revolution as nobody had done before. We are advancing towards the socialist revolution consciously, firmly and unswervingly, knowing that it is not separated from the bourgeois-democratic revolution by a Chinese Wall, and knowing too that (in the last analysis) struggle alone will determine how far we shall advance, what part of this immense and lofty task we shall accomplish, and to what extent we shall succeed in consolidating our victories.

LENIN, V. XVIII, part 1, pp. 363–4⁶⁷

And he added this conclusion:

Incidentally, the Kautskys, Hilferdings, Martovs, Chernovs, Hillquits, Longuets, MacDonalds, Turatis and other heroes of ‘Two and-a-Half’ Marxism were incapable of understanding this relation between the bourgeois-democratic and the proletarian-socialist revolutions. The first develops into the second. The second, in passing, solves the problems of the first. The second consolidates the work of the first. Struggle, and struggle alone, decides how far the second succeeds in outgrowing the first.

LENIN, V. XVIII, part 1, pp. 365–6⁶⁸

67 Lenin 1966d, pp. 51–2.

68 Lenin 1966d, p. 54.

Lenin insists that 'struggle alone' will decide how successfully we can move forward. Lenin remains convinced of his theory which is embodied today in the idea – 'alliance of the working class with the peasantry'. For Trotsky it is 'either-or', but for Lenin it is a unified process, understood in its dialectic development over complicated transitional stages on the basis of the present constellation of class forces. And this is not an academic issue but a topical issue with decisive significance for today's practice, for the question of the peasantry confronts us every day, it confronts us in a range of practical demands and daily tasks. Clearly the whole argument we are now having has the most immediate practical significance. And if we once again compare everything comrade Trotsky has written in the aforementioned books, then it will become obvious that comrade Trotsky has not only not repudiated Trotskyism but is also trying to give the impression that our party adopted Trotskyism (the idea of permanent revolution) as part of its Bolshevik arsenal. This is the crudest distortion of Leninism, and it shows that comrade Trotsky's past weighs heavily on his present, and this conclusion is self-evident for comrade Trotsky has recently taken a series of new steps in the direction of his past.

In March 1919, he was very cautious in his formulations on the theory of 'permanent revolution'. After going through the discussion of 1921, comrade Trotsky in 1922 (see the introduction and notes to his book 1905) found clearer and firmer words in his vocabulary to defend his old theory which had been superseded by the course of events.

Having again gone through a new discussion in 1923–4, comrade Trotsky is not restricting himself to a positive evaluation of his former 'forecasts'; he is not even satisfied with his 'revelation' about the 'ideological rearmament' of Bolshevism. He goes onto the attack against Leninist theory. He took this new step in *The New Course* and he continues this attack in 'The Lessons of October'. This has become a 'fashionable book'. It serves up to our young members in the party a 'theory' which is poisoned with the venom of Trotskyism, which distorts Leninism, which criticises its principles, and which is in this sense anti-Leninist.

5 One Big Mistake and it's All Downhill from There⁶⁹

In his now famous introduction to the third volume of his works, comrade Trotsky dealt with the historical facts in the crudest way.

69 A free translation of 'Bol'shaia oshibka tianet vse ostal'nye'.

As a result of this, it is necessary to take time to reconstruct them, to examine those observations which are less principled, more petty, although frequent and no less important in nature – we must deal with several factual inaccuracies, errors, and distortions which comrade Trotsky has allowed into his book. It might be said: one big mistake and it's all downhill from there. This ‘charge’, which can be clearly felt in the preface, pushes comrade Trotsky not only into making big errors of principle, but also inevitably causes a series of factual inaccuracies and distortions. I will now single out several of them because it is quite impossible to consider at this point all the facts in this book.

First of all, the ‘internal struggle’ which occurred in our party in the course of March–November 1917. Here comrade Trotsky himself refutes comrade Trotsky. To illustrate this, his current literary statements must be compared with his earlier ones.

In the introduction to *Results and Prospects* (1919), from which I have already quoted repeatedly, comrade Trotsky writes that ‘when the Revolution of 1917 broke out, the Bolshevik Party [...] – after some internal struggle – frankly adopted tactics directed towards the socialist dictatorship of the working class’ (see ‘Introduction’, p. 5; my emphasis. A.B.).⁷⁰

In the note on p. 285 of his book 1905, comrade Trotsky observes that Bolshevism ‘rearmed itself ideologically’, ‘not without inner struggle’ (my emphasis. A.B.).⁷¹

And in the introduction to the third volume, he writes about this again in the following way:

And yet, even in this party, in its upper reaches, on the eve of decisive action, a group of experienced revolutionaries, Old Bolsheviks, formed from among its leaders, who were *sharply opposed* to a proletarian overthrow and, in the course of the most critical period of the revolution from February 1917 to approximately February 1918, took an *essentially Social-Democratic* position on all fundamental questions. *Lenin's excep-*

70 Trotsky 1965b, p. 164. The following, indicated by me in square brackets in the text, has been omitted without ellipses from the original: ‘constituted a strong centralized organization uniting all the best elements of the advanced workers and revolutionary intellectuals, which’.

71 Trotsky 1972b, p. 317. The original translation of the phrase ‘*ideinoe perevooruzhenie Bol'shevizma*’ as ‘changed their policy line’ does not do justice to the original Russian and I have changed it accordingly.

tional influence in the party, already unparalleled at that time, was needed to protect the party and the revolution from the enormous confusion caused by this (my emphasis. A.B.).

TROTSKY, 1917, v. III, part 1, p. LXII⁷²

It is clear to everyone that the Trotsky of March 1919 and January 1922 refutes Trotsky's latter assertion, i.e. in September 1924.

And on the basis of this incorrect evaluation of the basic nature of the internal party relations from March to November 1917, comrade Trotsky permits himself a whole series of incorrect evaluations, and frequently also direct distortions of the facts relating to various moments from the pre-October period. Comrade Trotsky represents the disagreements at the April Conference of our party as extremely bitter ones. He characterises the viewpoint of the 'opposition' at the April Conference as 'explicitly Menshevik'. I maintain that, despite the fact that differences existed at that time and that there were certainly waverings, they were not as bad or as extensive as comrade Trotsky is describing them now.

About four years ago, I had occasion to examine these waverings: 'These waverings were insignificant in contrast with the revolutionary tempering undertaken by the Bolshevik Party in a fifteen-year struggle against the Mensheviks, Liquidators, and Social Chauvinists' (see A. Bubnov, *Osnovnye voprosy istorii RKP(b)*, p. 39).⁷³ The voting at the conference is extremely revealing in this regard. At the April Conference, 133 delegates had a binding vote and 18 had consultative votes. If you look at all the voting, you will see this picture: the resolution on war was adopted by the majority, with 7 abstentions; the resolution on the Provisional Government had 6 abstentions and 7 against; the resolution on the land question had 11 abstentions; the resolution on the current situation had 8 abstentions; the resolution on the coalition ministry had 2 abstentions, and, finally, the resolution on the International was adopted by all, with 6 abstentions.

Can we really speak of bitter disagreements when we had such a voting pattern at the conference? Take the elections to the Central Committee. Among those elected were comrade Kamenev and comrade Nogin. Meanwhile, all participants at the conference will remember that none other than comrade Lenin himself came out in support of Kamenev and Nogin during the elections, and was opposed by several local comrades, for example, some Muscovites. Surely

⁷² Trotsky, Document 1, p. 134.

⁷³ Bubnov 1924, p. 39.

this does not confirm Trotsky’s reading? We can all see that this contradicts comrade Trotsky’s inferences about the April Conference of our party.

Furthermore, let us look at some of comrade Trotsky’s conclusions about the demonstration of 10 June 1917 that did not take place. Comrade Trotsky writes: ‘The attempt, on Lenin’s initiative, to organise a demonstration on 10 June, was denounced as adventurism by those comrades who were dissatisfied with the nature of the April demonstration’ (see Trotsky, 1917. v. III, part 1, p. xxxi).⁷⁴

With regard to the April Conference, it is well-known that if a ‘clash’ did occur here, it was with the ‘leftist’ comrade Bogdat’ev and his supporters. On the June ‘instance’, comrade Trotsky is throwing his remarks about quite recklessly.

The demonstration of 10 June was called off, and took place on the 18th of the same month with the approval of the Menshevik-SR Soviet. Comrades from the Petrograd Committee of our party objected long and hard against this demonstration being called off, and comrade Lenin defended calling it off. At a closed meeting of the Petrograd Committee on 11 June, comrade Lenin spoke, and this is what we heard from him about calling off the demonstration:

‘The dissatisfaction voiced by most comrades over the cancellation of the demonstration is quite natural, but the Central Committee had no alternative’ (see *Krasnaia letopis’*, no. 9, 1923, p. 11).

And later he says the following:

Even in ordinary warfare, it sometimes happens that a planned offensive has to be cancelled for strategic reasons. This is all the more likely to occur in class warfare, depending on the vacillation of the middle, petty-bourgeois groups. We must be able to take account of the situation and be bold in adopting decisions. The cancellation was absolutely necessary, as subsequent developments proved.

see *Krasnaia letopis’*, no. 9, 1923, p. 11

Comrade Lenin concludes his speech thus:

We must give them no pretext for attack. Let them attack, and the workers will realise that it is an attack on the very existence of the proletariat. But reality is on our side, and it is a moot point whether their attack will succeed – at the front there are the troops, among whom discontent is very strong, and in the rear there is the high cost of living, economic dislocation and so on. The Central Committee does not want to force your

74 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 104.

decision. Your right, the right to protest against the actions of the Central Committee, is a legitimate one, and your decision must be a free one.

see *Krasnaia letopis'*, no. 9, 1923, p. 12⁷⁵

Research demands that we acquaint ourselves with the most important documents relating to the event under study. Comrade Trotsky needlessly ignored comrade Lenin's speech at the CC meeting on 11 June 1917 – had he not done so, he would not have had to throw around such reckless remarks. Let's look now at some facts connected with October.

We now have protocols of the CC of the party pertaining to the basic moments of the era of October: the protocol of 10 October 1917 and the protocol of 16 October of the same year.⁷⁶ The protocol of 10 October 1917 reveals disagreements in the Central Committee on the question of armed insurrection, but at the same time these same protocols tell us that the majority of the CC was in favour of insurrection: 10 for and 2 against (at the meeting of 10 October 1917). Then the first Political Bureau of the Central Committee was elected. Who was elected to this Bureau? Lenin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Trotsky, Stalin, Sokol'nikov and Bubnov. Zinoviev and Kamenev were the two comrades who had voted against on 10 October, and yet they were elected to the Politburo on the eve of the insurrection. Surely this tells comrade Trotsky something? The meeting on 16 October took up this same question of armed insurrection. In attendance, besides the members of the CC, were comrades Kalinin, [Vasilii] Shmidt, Krylenko, [Gleb] Bokii, Shlyapnikov, Volodarsky and others. Lenin's resolution (in principle) received 20 votes for, 2 against, with 3 abstentions. Again, this was amicable voting. The CC organised the military revolutionary centre made up of comrades Sverdlov, Stalin, Bubnov, Uritskii and Dzerzhinsky. There were waverings before October – this is well-known. But why did comrade Trotsky feel it necessary to make so much of these disagreements?

It is not out of place to cite facts about how this CC resolution of 10 October was received in the leadership of the Moscow regional organisation. In the protocol of the meeting of the Moscow regional bureau on 14 October 1917, we read: 'Without any discussion at all, the regional bureau unanimously supports the resolution of the CC (referring to the resolution of 10 October. A.B.), because it fully conforms with the resolution adopted at the plenum of 27–28 September' (see *Protokol zasedaniia MOB R.S. - D.R.P.* of 14 October 1917, p. 55).⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Lenin 1964ll, p. 79, pp. 80–1.

⁷⁶ *Protokoly* 1958, pp. 83–105; for a digest in English, see *Resolutions* 1974, pp. 288–9.

⁷⁷ I have been unable to locate this source.

But the friction which occurred at this time, between the Moscow regional bureau and the Moscow Committee, was resolved smoothly, as is evident from the protocols of the Mosc. Reg. Bureau on 23, 24, and 25 October (the question ‘On the Party Fighting Centre’). And when comrade Trotsky in his third volume rants and raves against the ‘right wing’ of the party,⁷⁸ throws around words about Menshevism etc., and, in his book *On Lenin*, states categorically: ‘Lenin watched with anxiety the growing divergence between the mood of some leaders and that of the working masses’,⁷⁹ then it is regrettable that such factual materials and conclusions are forced on the party under the rubric of ‘studying October’. The party derives no benefit of any kind from this kind of ‘study’.

We must also single out comrade Trotsky’s famous idea that the October insurrection of 25 October was only a ‘supplementary insurrection’, that the genuine insurrection had happened before this. Comrade Trotsky writes about this as follows: ‘From the moment that the battalions, on the order of the Military Revolutionary Committee, refused to leave the city and remained, we had a victorious insurrection in the capital, covered with a slight veneer of remnants of the bourgeois-democratic state. The insurrection of 25 October was merely a supplement to this. This is why it proceeded painlessly’ (Trotskii, v. III, part 1, pp. 11–12).⁸⁰

And further on: ‘We were able more or less to time the seizure of power with the Second Congress of Soviets only because the “silent”, almost “legal” armed insurrection – at least in Petrograd – was three-quarters, if not nine-tenths, a reality’ (see Trotskii, v. III, part 1, p. 12).⁸¹

First and foremost, I will note that the history of the October Revolution knows various types of seizure of power and various types of insurrection. After all, the October Revolution was both in Petrograd and in Moscow, and in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, and in Lugansk, at the fronts and in the villages. In their studies, the future historians of the October Revolution must embrace the entire mass of this factual material, and only then will we obtain a true picture of the October Revolution. We must begin this now (it has already begun), but not the way comrade Trotsky is doing it. We know how the insurrection proceeded in Petrograd. We know that in Moscow it had a different character – protracted street-fighting occurred there, in which we were joined not only by the soldiers and armed workers (Red Guards) of Moscow but by those of other

78 Trotsky, Document 1, p. ??.

79 Trotsky 1971, p. 88.

80 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 122.

81 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 123.

towns in the Moscow region as well. The Moscow insurrection was a protracted affair. But the October Revolution also occurred in Ivanovo-Voznesensk. Here is how it happened there:

The October Revolution in Ivanovo-Voznesensk had its own unique character. The workers of Ivanovo-Voznesensk took power into their hands much earlier than was done not only in Moscow but even in Petrograd. And it happened in the most painless manner, without any kind of violence by the 'insurrectionists', without a single shot being fired and without any blood being spilled. At first glance, this seems far-fetched, but it was indeed like that. Power in Ivanovo-Voznesensk passed to the Communist Party two months before the October Revolution, when the results of the elections to the first democratic city дума after February were revealed. And in this new дума, elected on the basis of universal, equal, secret, etc voting, over 80 % of voters were communists, the other 20 % of voters, i.e. about 20 people, was made up of SRs, Mensheviks and other parties and non-party organisations. Given this state of affairs, it is clear why, at the first meeting of the дума, the communists became the masters.

see *Krasnaia letopis'*, no. 6, 1923, p. 279⁸²

And this was how the news of the victory of the workers in Petrograd was received in Ivanovo-Voznesensk:

The telegram from Petrograd about the (October) overthrow was received in Ivanovo in the evening during a meeting of the city дума. The chair's announcement of the transfer of power to the Soviets and the Communist Party was met with deafening applause from the members and the attending public throng and with shouts: 'Finally, it's about time'. Then the meeting moved on to discuss other issues on the agenda.

see *Krasnaia letopis'*, no. 6, 1923, p. 280⁸³

And how did the seizure of power proceed at the fronts? It would be extremely interesting to have an analysis of how and why the numerous regiments, which in October 1917 were rushed to Petrograd to crush the insurrection, never reached Petrograd. It might be explained, by the way, by the role of the Bol-

82 Firger 1923, p. 279.

83 Firger 1923, p. 280.

shevik cells. This role was surely by no means as insignificant as comrade Trotsky would have it in his book *How the Revolution Armed*: ‘the purely organisational role of the Bolshevik cells in the regiments was not particularly noticeable’ (see vol. 1, p. 13).⁸⁴ The importance of the Bolshevik cells hardly lay only in their selection by the ‘commanders’. But this is a matter for historians. Let’s concentrate here only on the insurrection in the capital.

In 1923, comrade [Nikolai] Podvoiskii described the insurrection in Petrograd. Let’s use his materials. ‘In light of the intention of Kerensky’s government’, we read in comrade Podvoiskii’s work,

to try in this way to bleed the Petrograd Soviet white, to deprive it of active forces, the Soviet adopted a resolution on 9 October about the defence of Petrograd, a resolution proposed by the Bolsheviks which referred to the need to create a special military revolutionary staff as a counterbalance to the staff of the Petrograd Military District, which the proletariat of the capital had every reason to distrust.

see *Krasnaia letopis*, no. 8, 1923, p. 15⁸⁵

Later:

The next closed meeting of the Soviet, on 12 October, was already devoted to the technical questions vis-à-vis the organisation of this revolutionary staff, and, over the protests of the Mensheviks, an order was adopted about it and a name: ‘Military Revolutionary Committee’, and on 16 October, despite fierce agitation by those same Mensheviks who called the MRC a ‘staff for the seizure of power’, the order about it and the organisation were affirmed by the plenum of the Petrograd Soviet’.

ibid, p. 16⁸⁶

And finally: ‘On 21 October, during the night, the commissars of the Military Revolutionary Committee were sent to regiments of the Petrograd garrison’ (ibid, p. 18).⁸⁷ This was the first stage. ‘On 22 and 23 October’, comrade Podvoiskii writes, ‘preparations were beginning. Every atom [*atom*] of revolutionary power was supplied to the strongest movement and put in the most

84 Trotsky 1979, p. 4.

85 Podvoiskii 1923, p. 15.

86 Podvoiskii 1923, p. 16.

87 Podvoiskii 1923, p. 18.

responsible place. Baltic sailors were summoned from Kronstadt and Helsingfors; military vessels were summoned from Kronstadt. The following vessels were moored around Petrograd: the cruiser *Aurora* [*Avrora*], the *Dawn of Freedom* [*Zaria Svobody*] were included in the chain of operations. The sailors on the *Aurora*, who were guarding the Winter Palace, were rehearsed' (ibid, p. 20).⁸⁸

According to comrade Trotsky, by this time the insurrection was apparently already nine-tenths over, but comrade Podvoiskii stated: 'On 22 and 23 preparations were beginning. Every atom ...', etc. (my emphasis. A.B.).

Comrade Podvoiskii defined the armed forces of insurrection thus:

The Military Revolutionary Committee decided to use first and foremost the most steadfast units for the insurrection. The centre of the attack should be the Petrograd Regiment, and as for the flanks, on the left, the Kexholm Guard Regiment and the Second Baltic Fleet Detachment, with the Egerskii and Izmailovskii Regiments bringing up the rear, and on the right, the Pavlovsk Regiment together with the Red Guard. The Finliandskii and 180th Regiments were charged with securing Vasil'evskii Island, and taking hold of all passages across the Neva. The same charge on the Petersburg Side was given to the Grenaderskii Regiment and the Ognemetno-Khimicheskii Battalion, which were responsible for all operations on the Petersburg Side, the occupation there of all strategic points and the Troitskii Bridge, and also all passage to the Petersburg Side across the Neva and the crushing of any possible counter-revolutionary assaults there. The Moskovskii Regiment and the Red Guard of the Vyborg Side were to defend Liteinyi Bridge and all passage to the Vyborg Side, and also to occupy the Finland Station. They, and the Grenaderskii Regiment, were to be the vanguard to Beloostrov, so that the government would not have the chance to advance any units from the direction of Finland that were unknown to the MRC. In the central district were the Litovskii and Volynskii Regiments and units from the Pavlovsk and Preobrazhenskii Regiments. The remainder of the Litovskii, Volynskii, 1st Zapasnyi and Gvardeiskii Regiments and of the 6th Sapernyi Battalion received orders to defend all approaches to Smolnyi Institute, in the event that government forces broke through the chain and surrounded the Winter Palace, or in the event of the arrival of forces from somewhere on the outskirts. Units of the Izmailovskii and Petrograd Regiments were moved to protect

88 Podvoiskii 1923, p. 20.

the approaches to Petrograd from the direction of the Warsaw and Baltic railway stations and the *Narvskii shosee*.

see pp. 23–4

And finally: ‘The leaders decided that the troops will attack the Winter Palace during the night of 25 October’ (ibid, p. 24).⁸⁹

It is well-known that Kerensky’s government also took a series of military measures at that time. ‘The Provisional Government’, says comrade Podvoiskii,

rending the air with promises to destroy the Bolsheviks, proceeded to mobilise its own forces. It had already, several days before, summoned cadets [*iunkery*] from Peterhof and Oranienbaum, quartering them in the Winter Palace. The cadets of the Petrograd military academies were also mobilised and some were moved to the Winter Palace. On 22nd of the month, the cadet defence in the Winter Palace was reinforced with cadets from detachments of the Mikhailovskii, Vladimirskii and Pavlovskii academies and others. In the square, English armoured vehicles with English crews were deployed. On 22 October, a watch of sailors of the *Aurora* refused to defend Kerensky’s government any more and were replaced by a cadet patrol. An artillery battery from the Mikhailovskii military academy was brought up with cannons.

ibid, pp. 21–2⁹⁰

The government was going over to the ‘attack’. Here are the facts:

On the night of 24th with the aid of a detachment of cadets, the Bolshevik newspapers *Soldat* [*Soldier*] and *Rabochii put* [*Workers’ Path*] are closed, as are the printing presses that produced them. Against the editorial boards of these newspapers and authors of articles calling for the toppling of the existing system, the Provisional Government proposes that the Minister of Justice initiate judicial proceedings immediately.

Furthermore, a decree is issued initiating criminal proceedings against members of the Military Revolutionary Committee under the Petrograd Soviet who are charged with distributing proclamations calling for disobedience of the authorities and activity directed against the authorities.

89 Podvoiskii 1923, pp. 23–4.

90 Podvoiskii 1923, pp. 21–2.

At the same time, the Minister of Justice summarily sends the Public Prosecutor [*prokuror palaty*] an order to arrest immediately all those Bolsheviks, participants in the events of 3–5 July, who, after being released on bail, engaged in any kind of anti-government agitational activity.

Arkhiv revoliutsii 1917 g. Oktiabr'skii perevorot, pubd 'Novaia epokha', 1918, pp. 164–5⁹¹

The commanders of the Petrograd Military District simultaneously issued a series of 'attack' orders. We were 'defending ourselves'. I will not address the series of subsequent events: the cadet insurrections in Petrograd, the seizure by troops of Kerensky's Gatchina and Tsarskoe selo, etc. But I have conveyed enough for you to be able to judge whether the insurrection on 25 October was 'supplementary', 'silent', 'dry', etc., as comrade Trotsky describes it.

I have analysed basic errors made by comrade Trotsky in the introduction to his 'The Lessons of October'. I have taken into consideration a whole series of inaccuracies and distortions of fact which have been permitted in this book. This book is not a literary work but a political document that tells of comrade Trotsky's attack on Leninist theory and on the leadership personnel of Bolshevism.

91 *Oktiabr'skii perevorot* 1918, pp. 164–5.

‘The Struggle for the Party’¹

S. Kanatchikov

Our party has always held revolutionary Marxist theory dear and always fought ruthlessly against those who have tried to use one or another pretext to ‘amend’ or supplement it with postulates from the repository of various petty-bourgeois or bourgeois theories. But at the same time, to us our revolutionary theory was never the ‘dogma’ our enemies often accused it of being; it developed in close connection with the praxis of the mass revolutionary movement. For us, theory always merely assisted us in the revolutionary struggle, lighting the path along which the fighting revolutionary masses had to move. Without revolutionary theory, our Communist Party would not have been able to become what it is today. This is why we struggle so ruthlessly, and will continue to struggle, against those who distort our Bolshevik theory. ‘Bolshevism arose in 1903 on a very firm foundation of Marxist theory’, said comrade Lenin.

The correctness of this revolutionary theory, and of it alone, has been proved, not only by world experience throughout the nineteenth century, but especially by the experience of the seekings and vacillations, the errors and disappointments of revolutionary thought in Russia. For about half a century – approximately from the forties to the nineties of the last century – progressive thought in Russia, oppressed by a most brutal and reactionary tsarism, sought eagerly for a correct revolutionary theory, and followed with the utmost diligence and thoroughness each and every ‘last word’ in this sphere in Europe and America. Russia achieved Marxism – the only correct revolutionary theory – through the agony she experienced in the course of half a century of unparalleled torment and sacrifice, of unparalleled revolutionary heroism, incredible energy, devoted searching, study, practical trial, disappointment, verification, and comparison with European experience. Thanks to the political emigration caused by tsarism, revolutionary Russia, in the second half of the nineteenth century, acquired a wealth of international links and excellent information

1 S. Kanatchikov, ‘V bor’be za partiiu’, *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, no. 1 (36), 1925, pp. 5–13.

on the forms and theories of the world revolutionary movement, such as no other country possessed.

That is what comrade Lenin wrote in his pamphlet *Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder* in 1920. It was absolutely right. Bolshevism could not be what it later became if it had not gone through the preceding experience of revolutionary struggle in Western Europe, a struggle of unheard-of cruelty and severity, interspersed with short victories and protracted defeats, interspersed with periods of reaction. We were there to learn and gain experience. 'Bolshevism, which had arisen on this granite foundation of theory', said comrade Lenin in the same article,

went through fifteen years of practical history (1903–17) unequalled anywhere in the world in its wealth of experience. During those fifteen years, no other country knew anything even approximating to that revolutionary experience, that rapid and varied succession of different forms of the movement – legal and illegal, peaceful and stormy, underground and open, local circles and mass movements, and parliamentary and terrorist forms.²

But through this entire experience of struggle of the Bolshevik Party there runs like a red thread its own struggle for the consistency and purity of its theoretical foundations on the one hand, and for the power, strength, and discipline of its organisation on the other. Therefore the history of the Bolshevik Party is almost continuously filled with struggle against all kinds of deviations from its revolutionary theory and practice, both in terms of trends which formed inside the party, and trends, parties and groups which sought to attack us from the outside. For a long time, our party, in the person of comrade Lenin, had to fight for the right to an independent existence in its struggle against Populism. Comrade Lenin had to show the populists that Russia was already on the road of capitalist development and that in Russia a class of industrial workers existed, although it was not huge in number compared with the rest of the population, but its organisational potential and its revolutionary role in the future were so significant that this class could become the basis of the struggle against the autocratic government. Soon after comrade Lenin had affirmed and substantiated revolutionary Marxist theory, he was forced to defend it against attacks from various people from bourgeois circles, so-called

2 Lenin 1966b, pp. 25–6.

legal Marxists who were trying to use the growing revolutionary movement to fight against the autocratic government in the hands of the liberal bourgeoisie. In this sense, legal Marxism was trying to adapt the theory of Marxism to the interests of the bourgeoisie, by stripping it of everything that made it revolutionary. It sought to reject the dialectical method of Marxism, the theory of class struggle, arguing that the future development of capitalism leads to the softening of class contradictions, because the middle classes grow in number, the workers' wages rise, and their material situation improves. So legal Marxists like Struve, [Sergei] Bulgakov, and others maintained that over time capitalist society imperceptibly, gradually transforms or grows into a socialist society, without disasters and upheavals. Following on the Legal Marxists, the so-called Bernsteinian Reformists tried to foist this same theory on the working class. That was the first stage of the struggle by the party of the working class for its independent existence, a struggle defended at that time by comrades Lenin and Plekhanov. *Iskra*, the illegal newspaper organised abroad in 1900, whose ideological inspiration was comrade Lenin, conducted a ruthless struggle to bring together a unified Social Democratic Workers' Party. At that time, this central organ of the party had to fight, on the one hand, for the purity of revolutionary theory and against any contamination of it, and, on the other hand, against disarray and primitiveness [*kustarnichestvo*] and for a unified, centralised, disciplined party of the working class.

The 'Economists', against whom the old *Iskra* had to fight, were dragging the working class backwards, and were trying, intentionally or unintentionally, to abandon the working class at the lowest stage of its political development, in a state of disarray and fragmentation. The 'Economists' maintained that the working class was not mature enough for political struggle and that it should be drawn into this political struggle gradually by organising it initially on the basis of its day-to-day petty economic interests, and not immediately promoting scary demands like the 8-hour work day and others; this should be approached gradually, or, as it was customary to say at the time in a well-known satirical ditty, 'move forward more softly, working people' [*tishe vpered, rabochii narod*].³ Others preached that it was necessary to separate the economic struggle of the workers from the political, assigning the political struggle to the liberal bourgeoisie and the economic struggle to the workers.

3 From 'The Hymn of the Most Modern Russian Socialist' [*Gimn noveishego russkogo sotsialista*], which ridiculed the Economists. It was written by Martov under the pseudonym Narsissus Tuporylov to the tune of the *Varshavianka*, and published in the journal *Zaria* in April 1901.

The Second Congress of the Social Democratic Party in 1903 put an end to the fight against 'economism' and against primitiveness and disarray in the ranks of the working class, and provided the party with a unified theory, a unified programme and tactics. But this new congress laid the basis for a new split in the ranks of the leading centre of the party and thereby laid the foundation for our Communist Party, at that time the Bolsheviks.

At that time, the minority, later known as the Mensheviks, tried to follow in the footsteps of the 'economists' on organisational issues, endeavouring to keep the working class, its organisation, and its party in a state of fragmentation and shapelessness. Comrade Lenin, who for a long time in *Iskra* had defended the plan for the creation of a unified, centralised, disciplined organisation of the working class, came out in full force for his own organisational plan. He maintained that for the working class to be able to successfully defeat a very powerful enemy – the autocratic government, it needed not only a theory of revolution but also a strong, united and disciplined organisation tied to the working class with thousands of threads and relying in its struggle on these masses and supported by them. Therefore, said comrade Lenin, we must build our organisation so that at the head of the party is a leading group of comrades (CC) who see eye to eye with each other and who can guide the work at the local level and make sure that this work is carried out according to a definite plan, and that the party workers at the local level perform their duties; a group which would be able to stop those comrades who were not fulfilling their duties and transfer them. Furthermore, there must be the strictest division of labour among all the party members, so that a cadre of party officials forms in our party who are occupied with specific areas of revolutionary work, i.e. professional revolutionaries. Comrade Lenin maintained that the working class could realise its own leadership only if the advanced part of this class, the best and most loyal representatives of this class, was organised into a centralised, disciplined party of the working class. The history of the future struggle confirmed how deeply correct comrade Lenin was to defend this kind of organisation, and how wrong our Menshevik opponents were. In particular, at this time the most passionate and zealous defender of the principle of formless party organisation was comrade Trotsky, who in his pamphlet *Our Political Tasks* called the Bolshevik plan of organisation a conspiratorial plan, Jacobinism, and called the preparation for armed struggle, for the seizure of power by the proletariat – a dictatorship over the proletariat, and comrade Lenin – a dictator.⁴ The Bolsheviks were fighting for a unified, organised party before the 1905 Revolution. After the defeat of the

4 Trotsky 1980b, pp. 121–8.

1905 Revolution, we Bolsheviks again had to wage a ruthless struggle against those who were trying to destroy our hard-won and battle-forged organisation. In 1906, the Mensheviks began to call for an All-Russian Non-Party Workers' Congress to be convened, which, they suggested, would create a legal workers' party on the model of the West European legal parties. From the outset, our party sharply criticised this plan for a workers' congress and opposed the formation of a liberal workers' party. After they were defeated, the Mensheviks launched a new attack on fundamental Bolshevik positions and on the underground organisation of our party. They called for an end to the underground organisation, regarding it as a conservative holdover from a stage of development the working class had already gone through, and as an impediment to the further advancement of its movement. In its stead, the Mensheviks urged the working class to join legal organisations and to fight within the narrow legal framework of the autocratic government, thereby adapting the struggle of the working class to this autocratic Stolypinist legality. The Bolsheviks, led by comrade Lenin, conducted a very ruthless struggle against these liquidationist efforts and in favour of preserving revolutionary theory and the old underground organisation. In this most dismal of times, when all the weak and irresolute abandoned the ranks of the revolutionary parties, we Bolsheviks had to fight not only against overt liquidationism but also against covert liquidationism, which hid under the banner of extra-factionalism and supra-factionalism, the expression and representative of which was at that time comrade Trotsky with his group of so-called Trotskyists.

At that time Trotskyism was indeed doing the work of those blatant liquidators who had been exposed by the Bolsheviks and were unable to attract any sympathy from the broad worker masses. In essence then Trotskyism was nothing more than the left wing of liquidationism, and adopted a most aggressive position vis-à-vis the Bolsheviks. Furthermore, we had to fight against various 'leftist' deviations in the ranks of our own Bolshevik faction, including 'boycottists', 'ultimatists', 'God-constructivists', and 'God-seekers'. These so-called leftist groups, later gathered under the name of the 'Vpered' group, started out with an incorrect evaluation of the prospects of revolution, for they were cut off from the worker masses, had no empathy with them, and were unable to judge the current situation correctly. They believed that the 1905 Revolution had not been defeated, but that the proletarian masses had paused for a short while and that any day now a wave of revolutionary movement would rise up, and then at that time we would have to embark on the decisive final battle against autocracy. Starting from this assumption, they considered that any work in legal organisations by our faction in the state duma, as well as in trade unions and cultural-enlightenment societies, merely distracted the working class and our

party from the immediate battle tasks and battle preparations for the armed insurrection. And so they called for a boycott of elections to the State Duma and for no participation in legal organisations. They called instead for fighting militias [*boevye druzhiny*] to be organised, for workers to be trained to shoot and to handle weapons in order to prepare them for the final battle. In terms of theory, the 'Vperedists' tried to supplement Marxist philosophy with the philosophy of bourgeois thinkers like Mach, Avenarius, Ostwald, and others. Others (Lunacharsky) believed that the proletariat needed religion, not the old, defunct religion, but a new religion that deified human potential. Given all these doctrines and deviations, both inside and outside the faction, our party had to fight ruthlessly and purge our revolutionary ranks of the phrases of all those who yesterday had been fighting side by side with us against autocracy. Only in this way was our party able to purify itself of everything that contaminated its theory, impeded the revolutionary struggle and slowed down the future development and formation of our fighting organisation.

The war did not introduce substantive changes and regroupings into the ranks of the fighting parties because in essence the war was merely a continuation of peacetime politics. Therefore, all the apolitical parties – some immediately, others gradually, cloaking themselves in loud deceitful phrases – went over to the side of their own governments. And only the Bolshevik Party stayed true to its revolutionary traditions. From the very beginning it fought resolutely against the autocratic government and the bourgeoisie, calling on the workers to transform the imperialist war into a civil war. It called on the workers not to defend their own country but to fight against their own bourgeoisie and their own government.

Comrade Lenin and a group of close comrades had to keep fighting for many years not only with their own government and bourgeoisie, but also with the social-chauvinists, pacifists, and hidden defencists, by exposing their treacherous nature to the broader worker masses. With the years of revolution, the Bolshevik Party, led by comrade Lenin, had the chance to spread the revolutionary essence of our theoretical and practical approach to revolutionary struggle. In this heroic era, our party had to defend itself and attack not only our class enemies but also those who sought to compromise our party in the ranks of the working class. The cruel Civil War, which our Communist Party led by comrade Lenin had to fight, saw not only our victories but also bitter defeats when we had to make deep retreats from the direct path of revolutionary development. In these difficult days, there were moments when various so-called leftist deviations were revealed in the ranks of our party. This happened during the Brest Peace, when Left Communists together with comrade Trotsky, ignoring the war-fatigue of the peasantry, demanded peace at whatever cost, called for

the continuation of revolutionary war, and touted the slogan 'Neither Peace Nor War', an incomprehensible slogan that gave nothing to the peasantry.

The end of the Civil War in 1920 and at the start of 1921 was accompanied by a new outburst of opposition in the discussion on the role and tasks of trade unions. The opposition, led by comrade Trotsky, once again ignored the fatigue with the chains of War Communism experienced by the broad worker masses who shared many ties with the peasantry, and demanded that near-military discipline be introduced into the trade unions, and that trade unions be transformed into appendages of the organs of state power. From many of these discussions, the basic core of our party led by comrade Lenin emerged victorious, demonstrating to the broad masses every time the power, strength, and discipline of our Communist Party. Such was the tortuously long path taken by our party, led by comrade Lenin.

As the reader can see, comrade Lenin, fighting a battle for a unified, centralised, disciplined party, connected with the broad masses and, guided by revolutionary theory, never spared his enemies, and was never guided by sentimental motives about exacerbating the struggle inside the party, for which he frequently rebuked conciliators of all stripes.

This fundamental tactical line of the party has been continued and is being continued even after the death of its leader, comrade Lenin. The basic leadership core of our party, forged in battle alongside comrade Lenin and under his leadership, continues this course just as boldly and resolutely. It is true that at present we have nobody who is his equal, but this basic core of the party continues his work with equal success. The discussion at the end of 1923 and the start of 1924, when the opposition again spoke out, in effect occurred in comrade Lenin's absence for he was unable to take part in it because of his grave illness, but it was conducted very successfully by the basic leadership core of our party. During this discussion, comrade Trotsky, together with various oppositionist groups, tried to launch a surprise attack on the fundamental strongholds of our party during a time of crisis and in comrade Lenin's absence. The opposition tried to shake the foundations of our organisation, its party apparatus, by trying to replace it, or substituting it with a struggle of formless trends and factions inside the party. The opposition tried to counterpose to the old generation of fighters, who grew up under comrade Lenin's leadership, a so-called younger generation who on closer scrutiny turned out to have come from unreliable petty-bourgeois ranks. These attacks by the oppositions were proudly beaten back by our leadership group, which was supported and endorsed by the entire party, first of all at the Thirteenth Party Conference and later at the Thirteenth Party Congress, at which the statements of the opposition were roundly condemned and rejected as a petty-bourgeois deviation. The

recent discussion by comrade Trotsky in his article 'The Lessons of October' is a new attempt to attack the theoretical foundations of Leninism. This attack however did not take our party by surprise, and its leadership core – the Central Committee – delivered a decisive and well-deserved rebuke to comrade Trotsky. This latter discussion shows that the basic principles of Leninism have not only permeated the leadership of our party and been assimilated by it, but are also shared in their basic features by the overwhelming majority of the grass-roots cells of our party.

The year our party has experienced without comrade Lenin has vividly shown that the principles laid out by comrade Lenin, as well as the long and stubborn struggle for revolutionary theory and for the organised centralist principles of our party, have sufficiently helped the broad masses of our party to assimilate them and to learn how to defend them. That is why we boldly look to the future of our Communist Party and believe that, led by comrade Lenin's closest associates, it will emerge from the challenges confronting it in the forthcoming difficult and persistent struggle to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat not only here but also in Western Europe.

Introduction to ‘The Lessons of the Revolution’¹

Paul Levi

The effect that the following exposition by Leon Trotsky exercises and will exercise on the Russian Communist Party and perhaps the Russian state is neither self-evident nor understood. This is a historical consideration with – in itself – a not excessively sharp critique of the errors at the time of the present leader of the Communist International,² but in the meantime the latter has also wholly admitted these himself, so that does not by itself explain the excitement, and, after all, do not the saints of the Catholic Church also get to heaven, not thanks to their innate virtues, but on account of overcoming their inherent defects? This criticism refers to things from the past, and where it does include more recent matters, it does not, in our opinion, even start with the correct assumptions. And finally, in these more topical parts, the criticism does not even refer to Russian affairs, but it is German sufferings that are brought up, and the great effect they have on the Russian situation. In our opinion, these are apparent contradictions for which the German reader requires an explanation.

Trotsky persists in the thesis that a situation existed in Germany during October 1923 in which the Communist Party, with a decisive leadership – as that of Lenin in October 1917 – would have succeeded in taking power. Why Trotsky arrives at this assumption is, for us, understandable. The war in the Ruhr had been lost. One can confidently maintain that what occurred was something unequalled in modern history, and perhaps in history in general. A people had been dragged through a terrible war lasting four years, whose end only exacerbated the suffering. According to general opinion, one must believe that the lesson has taken root: only the pike gives two consecutive bites on the fishhook, and so it is said not to feel the pain. The Germans – an extremely emotional nation as is known – took two bites. The war in the Ruhr was fought according to the formula of the World War. Like that, it was a fight over principle, a fight about the sanctity of treaties and all manner of fine things. But the German government carried out this second war with more inhuman methods than the Wilhelmine government carried out the World War. From the standpoint of the

¹ Trotzki 1925. I have reproduced the translation from <http://www.marxists.org/archive/levi-paul/1924/lessons-october.htm>.

² Zinoviev, Document 11, p. ??.

German bourgeoisie, the World War had at least still a trace of decency within it. One shot the 'enemy' dead and got on with plundering one's own people only as an agreeable sideline, so to speak. In the war in the Ruhr, these side effects became shameless and the whole point of the thing: the French hardly bothered fighting the whole swindle; on the contrary, the longer the thing lasted the greater their chance of gaining a permanent foothold in the Ruhr, whereas the effects internally were devastating. Such a total undermining of every social condition in the short space of a few months, as occurred at that time in Germany, has perhaps not yet been seen anywhere else. Out of the ocean of tears represented by the war in the Ruhr emerged a small stratum of capitalists with increased economic power and increased lust for political power, and who had begun to undertake a terrible sorting out within their own capitalist ranks. The earlier inflationary bloodletting faded away, and the 'honest ones', who had not grasped the possibility of the Ruhr robberies in good time, were brought to their knees. The middle class, both those in industry and the intellectuals, lost their economic foundations. The workers saw their wages in gold pfennigs drastically reduced, and this effect on their economic basis also meant that all their organisational structures, trade unions, co-operatives and so forth, were brought to their knees. It was – one can safely say – a much stronger social earthquake than that upon which the events described by Trotsky are based. Trotsky's assumption has a certain logic on its side: since humankind has not yet died out, after such a social catastrophe some power will emerge that forms a new structure. And to such an extent one can still go along with Trotsky: for *logically* the force that must emerge after such a catastrophe will not be the one that caused it, so it is only logical that it will end with the seizure of power by the proletariat.

Trotsky only errs on one point, but this error is important. It does not follow that this force must therefore be the Communist Party, just because the German Communist Party (KPD) is affiliated to the Communist International, and simply because, once upon a time, in a comparable situation in Russia, Lenin risked this gamble and won, and since also by chance – we don't know whether Trotsky agrees also with this third premise – Grigorii Zinoviev is in charge of this Third International. So when all three preconditions coincide, when the German situation is wholly comparable to the Russian one, when the Communist International has become the most flawless organisation ever created, and when Zinoviev has become a politician of great stature and not just an idiot of European fame, there we have it: nevertheless, even if all that occurred, the KPD has still not yet earned the legal title to put itself forward as the force which could shape the state after that catastrophe. This title can only be earned legitimately. The Bolsheviks too could not have gained power in October on the basis of a declaration that they felt themselves fit for the job, but only on the basis of a determined policy which had been pursued from April to October 1917. Only this policy gave the Bolsheviks the necessary legitimacy.

In the tragic circumstances in Germany such a policy was not so difficult to put forward. As pointed out, there was of course the previous experience of the World War; it took really no more than that to demonstrate how this war in the Ruhr was a shameless bout of plunder by German capitalists against German non-capitalists, and the end of this policy must ensure that the social classes who suffered by it turn on the originator of the policy. In this situation, which if they were real communists was an unprecedented stroke of luck, one know-all and an even bigger know-all once again distinguished themselves by deciding the fate of the Communist Party. So Karl Radek – in Moscow – made that Schlageter speech,³ and the flashes from his spectacles, sparkling with enthusiasm, were seen in Berlin. Comrade Zinoviev gave it his blessing, for no 'national nihilism' can be tolerated in the communist ranks. If the 'slogan' was issued in such a way at the summit, one can imagine its effect further down. Then, as in all similar institutions, particularly those like the army, but also in the Communist Party, the law of exaggeration from top to bottom came into play. After all, the Muscovites spoke in this way, so anyone can imagine how it became further elaborated lower down, when the district sergeants Remmele, Könen and Ruth Fischer passed it on, and how it was perceived issuing from such illustrious mouths – not to speak of the lesser functionaries in Saxony, Thuringia and the Rhineland. And the result of all this was that, instead of a strong proletarian force at the end of the war in the Ruhr, there was a nationalist-communist stench which poisoned the whole of Germany. The National Socialists lay claim to the same right which the communists assert, to be the heirs of the foundering Germany: the one presents itself as National Communist, and the other as communist-nationalist, so at bottom both were the same. Both registered their claims almost simultaneously, one in Saxony, the other in Munich. History rejected both such claims; certainly not because it wanted to approve or ratify the existing state of affairs, but only because those who registered their claim to the inheritance then failed to prove they were the legitimate heirs. We are neither glorifiers of the past nor of the present – for we see its end approaching. We have had the good fortune to avert the fate of either a dictatorship of Muscovite soldiery or Austrian sexual-pathology, and justifiably so, historically, politically and ethically.

And so we believe, that in this actual assumption, Leon Trotsky's starting point is incorrect.

If, as far as the German circumstances of 1923 are concerned, the Trotskyist criticism is incorrect in its actual assumptions, it is even more incomprehensible how it could have had such a huge effect in Russia. We believe that to make this understandable, we must demonstrate two peculiarities of this criticism.

3 Karl Radek, 'Leo Schlageter, stranstvuiushchii v nichto?' *Pravda*, 22 June 1923, p. 2.

First of all, the criticism assumes the person of Lenin in a supposed political situation, and sets up, against this hypothetically acting Lenin in a hypothetical situation, the actual Zinoviev. Thus one peculiarity of the present intellectual life in the Russian Communist Party is demonstrated.

We believe that we can assure readers beforehand that we do not want the smallest suspicion to develop that we wish to belittle the labours of Lenin, and that those people who wield Marxist phrases, who even today in the whole of the Russian Revolution see no more than an extended Communist putsch, are totally foreign to us and our views. Lenin's achievements are great and will continue to be so, for in our opinion he was the first Socialist who confidently faced up to the problem of the 'seizure of power by the proletariat'. Most Socialists in the West fear this problem like the head of Medusa. Instead of correctly, truthfully and concretely formulating and considering this problem, they thereupon indulge in all sorts of nice and round phrases about democracy, about coalition, about the transitional stage and other fine matters which, all in all, do not clarify but disguise the problem. Lenin, on the other hand, long ago recognised this problem, and had taken steps for its resolution. Whether the solution chosen for Russia is correct and whether it is, without more ado, applicable to all other countries, is quite another question, and those like us who do not reply in the affirmative are not thereby doing any damage to the stature of the Leninist achievement. Today, Columbus is rightly celebrated as the discoverer of America, even if he believed he was travelling to India.

But this recognition of Lenin's stature, in itself no bad thing and shared by many, leads on to two phenomena whose dangers can be seen in the work of Trotsky. One is the emergence of a Lenin philology, similar to the Goethe philology in Germany or the Pandects literature of the Middle Ages. So in every single situation, volume, chapter, paragraph and clause of a sentence by Lenin will be quoted which will either fit the given situation or not as the case may be. In place of living criticism comes the conception, *autos epha*, the master has spoken. Not only does Trotsky quote Lenin's words in this way, he does it with a certain roguish justification, because he contrasts Lenin's words with the present fleshly leaseholders of Lenin's soul. His adversaries are not idle, for Zinoviev, Kamenev and Stalin hold up all the works, words and hints of Lenin to refute Trotsky. Commentaries and treatises are delivered and put forth. The *Tausves Jontof* has yet to be written, but we are sure that it will be.

Just as the person of Lenin is both fossilised and sanctified, so the same thing is happening to his works. As we said, Lenin's stature was a problem because most people were too timid to tackle him even theoretically. What raises him above the ranks of other Marxists is what he created organisationally. This has made the unthinking among his successors see only the organisational aspect. That is a very easy manner in which to examine all political problems. So all political problems are reduced to organisational mucking about, and it is not only that the brains of real children are

never so successful and inventive as in play, but this is particularly true of the politically childlike. The history of the German Communist Party proves it. The childlike urge to play was mainly expressed in the use of military terminology, and the 'little dears' talked of putting on the helmet and buckling on the sword.

We have a hint that Trotsky – whose past, however, defends him against this charge, since his earlier disputes with Lenin were in this area – to some extent puts this danger to rest. It cannot be taken amiss when the founder of the Red Army indulges in military images – after all, it is his field. But nevertheless what does it mean when Trotsky too, almost in the style of Zinoviev, speaks of separate periods of strategy and tactics, as if one period is replaced by another? What are tactics, then? Nothing more than the sum of measures necessary for the attainment of an existing military objective. Therefore, tactics without strategy are not a campaign and not even a manoeuvre, whilst strategy without tactics does not exist. One must picture it in order to comprehend the whole absurdity of transferring these military conceptions to the proletarian class struggle. The proletarian class struggle has an objective indeed – it is the emancipation of the working class and the replacement of capitalism. As is well-known, this aim will be achieved, not by a pitchfork revolution, but in a total movement of the working class. Within it, the individual movements and struggles of the class are not technical-tactical measures, but are part of the objective itself. So to what ridicule should Communist policy of recent years be condemned if strategy and tactics in the class struggle were not co-ordinated and had even been divided? What 'tactical' measures have they foisted on us? First there was the united front, then the splitting of the trade unions, and then grinding our teeth in exasperation, we all got together again and so on. And the aim of this 'strategy'? There was none. These tactical manoeuvres were so poorly arranged that the Commissar for War, Trotsky, would have dismissed any general who had so aimlessly chased the Red Army around any Russian parade ground. In the proletarian class struggle, there are in truth no strategic or tactical objectives in the military sense, and whoever tries to operate with such concepts is mistaken.

These little traits and peculiarities – not Lenin's but those of Leninism – have been often mentioned. Here they are only of special significance when they are put alongside another fact, which is that the whole dispute over Trotsky's book revolves around the present Russian situation, but speaks of a past German one. And yet everyone also knows that at its heart are very serious differences over Russian matters which have arisen between former comrades in arms. Thus in essence the Bolsheviks have to make a decision. The European revolution, which was the premise on which they made their revolution, has not happened. That the Bolsheviks made such an assumption is not, in our eyes, to their discredit, because it was their Socialist duty to locate their policy on this probability. There is no point in seeking the guilt or innocence of those involved in the revolution's failure, and who erred in the West and who erred in Russia is of no interest today. But the fact of its non-appearance is clear, and forces the Bolsheviks to

certain conclusions. There must be a showdown between them and the social stratum which, for the moment, has gained most from the Russian Revolution – the Russian peasantry. This could happen with a change of position by the Bolsheviks internally. It could be along the lines of democratic enlightenment within rural society, or it could be in the form of a violent revolt by the peasants. But, whatever it is, the Bolsheviks will have to make certain decisions, and everything that worries the Russian Communists in the last analysis boils down to this question of when and what decisions must be made.

With all this, why do the Bolsheviks argue over the past and over German issues? It seems to us that here the Russian movement is, in a way, returning once again to its roots. In earlier years none of us really came into close contact with the Russian labour movement. They operated in different ways from us in Europe. They developed within feudal absolutism. The forms of expression of the rest of the European labour movement which grew on a bourgeois-democratic basis – parliament, trade union, press, party, co-operative – were almost or wholly foreign to them. They operated in illegality, and therefore developed in a literary manner so that the stages in their development were – the 1905 events apart – resolutions and splits, the latter occurring mainly over resolutions. No European worker outside Russia would have understood a split because of a resolution.

We were always sympathetic to such phenomena in the Russian labour movement, seeing them from a passive angle, and taking into account the oppressive burden of persecution. Today, we are in the situation of looking at the active side of this. As they themselves proudly say, the Bolsheviks are the only legal party in Russia. Only they have freedom of press and assembly, and only they have freedom of speech. But freedom which exists for one alone, only one person, only one party, is just not freedom. Freedom for one person alone existed in Russia of old. Börne even says that in Russia, therefore, there is greater freedom since only a single one has it there, and, as always, the greater the number of participants, the smaller will be the portions. This greater freedom for one individual is in fact one single unfreedom – the freedom which the Bolsheviks take for themselves, like the Tsar, deprives others of some of their freedom, which therefore loses all its qualities. And so the Bolsheviks will suffer the same handicaps from their freedom that they once had from their unfreedom, and since their freedom has no complementary freedoms, they will lose all connection to reality, become lifeless, and, in place of the real political life and the wide vision which arises from this freedom, we see the literature and resolutions. The recent history of the Bolsheviks and the effects of this book both illustrate the point, for, without it, the effect of the book on Russia would be incomprehensible. And thus it seems to us that the Bolshevik movement has, as we said long ago, reached an *ad absurdum* point, for not only the past intransigent persecution but also its present intransigent rule condemn it to the life of a sect, and so force it, in the last analysis, to become its

political opposite. In this way, Trotsky's book can be of decisive significance, and by whom better than Trotsky, who already, a decade or more ago with brilliant derision, irony and good grounds, exposed the disadvantageous aspects of Bolshevik thought?⁴ And here perhaps lies the international significance of this book by Trotsky. In the international labour movement that will again emerge out the ashes of the last decade, and on a higher level too than ever before, the Russian labour movement cannot and will not be found wanting. So this book appears to us to be a sign that the real interests of the working class will destroy the move to Caesarism just at the point when Caesar has declared the *Communist Manifesto* a national religious shrine.

4 A reference to Trotsky 1980b.

‘The Lessons of the October Experiment’¹

Karl Kautsky

The despotism of the Bolshevik party in Russia appears to be stronger and less open to attack than ever. Yet already it shows signs of impending collapse. That has been proven very recently by the Trotsky case. It may seem at first sight as if its swift and easy settlement has strengthened the dictatorial regime to the greatest degree, and has shown that no opposition to this regime is now possible. But it is precisely the ease with which the opposition was suppressed that has demonstrated how deep the inner decay of Bolshevism already is. For this was not an external opposition that faced the present masters of Russia, but one from within their own ranks, the opposition of a man who together with Lenin created the dictatorship and justified it both practically and theoretically, while the majority of Russia's present ruling elite initially adopted a hesitant and vacillating attitude towards it – and for very good reasons.

This position taken by Zinoviev and company was demonstrated clearly by Trotsky's recent writings *Lenin and 1917*,² and even more clearly by the fact that they do not know how to answer his criticisms except by silencing the critic.

But something else is demonstrated by both of these writings and particularly by the latter: how even the best minds of Bolshevism have declined intellectually.

Trotsky speaks with contempt about the ‘parliamentary cretinism’³ of Social Democracy, by which he understands any interest in parliamentary proceedings and any involvement in such matters.

Engels, who introduced the expression, understood something different by it: the limited mentality of some parliamentarians who believe ‘that the whole world, its history and future, are governed and determined by a majority of votes in that particular representative body which has the honour to count them among its members’ (*Revolution und Konterrevolution in Deutschland*, pp. 107–8. Published under Marx's name, but written for the most part by Engels).⁴

1 Kautsky 1925. I have used the translation from <http://www.marxists.org/archive/kautsky/1925/x01/x01.htm>.

2 Trotsky 1971; Trotskii 1924d.

3 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 109.

4 Engels 1967, p. 218.

But such an overestimation of one's own sphere of activity is not found only among members of parliament. In every field of human action, the same conceit can be observed among limited minds.

At the same time that Trotsky engaged in the struggle for power and then came to power, he also succumbed to cretinism (in the sense defined here). But not the parliamentary variety. His is of another type: it is *military* cretinism. Trotsky believes that all the problems of our time can be solved by means of military force. Eventually he even wanted to revive the faltering production of Soviet Russia by recklessly militarising it. And yet it was faltering precisely because an excess of the militaristic spirit already prevailed within the state administration and statised industry. Trotsky then also failed miserably with his militarisation of labour.

He is no wiser for this. He still believes that anything can be achieved with military force. In his recent book, he wants to draw the 'Lessons of the Revolution', but as far as he is concerned no economic or social factors are worthy of consideration here, only the military factor. At one point he even talks in all seriousness about compiling a 'manual of civil war' (p. 68 of the German edition, published by E. Laub, Berlin).⁵

Elsewhere he says: 'This is why we need to approach the question of civil war, and of armed insurrection in particular, in a completely different way than has been seen up to now. Following Lenin, we keep repeating Marx's words about insurrection being an art.'⁶ This idea becomes an empty phrase if Marx's formulation is not supplemented by a study of the basic elements of the art of civil war in light of the enormous accumulated experience of recent years'.⁷

It is true that Engels (not Marx, in the already quoted book on revolution and counter-revolution in Germany, p. 117) says: 'insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other, and subject to certain rules of proceeding'.⁸

But these rules appear to Engels to be very simple. He is not thinking here of drawing up an official manual for the revolution. These rules, for Engels, comprise only two: 'Firstly, *never play with insurrection* unless you are fully prepared to face the consequences of your play'.⁹ This paragraph from the official manual of revolution should be urgently taken to heart by every member of the Communist International.

⁵ Trotsky, Document 1, pp. 127–8.

⁶ Cf. the letter from Friedrich Engels in the *New York Daily Tribune* on 18 September 1852, in which he specifically calls insurrection an art in reference to the German Revolution of 1848 (Engels 1967, p. 227).

⁷ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 133.

⁸ Engels 1967, p. 227.

⁹ Ibid.

And Engels also says: 'Secondly, the insurrectionary career once begun, act with the greatest determination, and on the offensive'.¹⁰

That is today still an indisputable principle which, however, naturally applies only to the insurrectionary career *once begun*. But in his book, Trotsky does not deal with that at all. For him the 'art of insurrection' is, rather, the art of calling an insurrection into being. Engels, again, does not deal with this at all. He discusses the question of how one should proceed in the insurrection, in connection with the German uprisings of 1849, which arose entirely spontaneously, out of a situation where the Imperial Constitution and the National Assembly were threatened by reaction, and thus, as Trotsky would say, out of 'parliamentary cretinism'. All the defenders of the National Assembly acted together at that moment, and Engels joined in the insurrection of the petty bourgeoisie in Baden and thus became, to employ Bolshevik phraseology, a 'lackey of the bourgeoisie'.

By contrast, not only does Trotsky examine the art of staging an insurrection, but it is also an insurrection of a very particular type whose arts he develops; not an insurrection against the counter-revolution, in which all defenders of the revolution work together, but an insurrection against *other revolutionaries*, who have to be defeated if they will not allow themselves to be commanded by Lenin and Trotsky.

Engels would have rejected participation in such an insurrection with indignation – and Marx no less so. After all, they said in the *Communist Manifesto*: 'The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to other working-class parties'.¹¹ They were the strongest opponents of sectarianism within the great workers' party which was their objective. They saw in sectarianism a sign of the immaturity of the workers' movement.

Not only have Lenin and Trotsky adopted this sign of the immaturity of the movement as their most important principle and made Bolshevism the most intolerant of all sects, but they have gone further than even the most immature of socialist sects have ever gone before: they have propagandised for and carried out the armed insurrection of their sect against other workers' parties – as Trotsky shows, initially in opposition to a substantial section of their own supporters, who rightly held doubts about such a type of civil war, at least so long as they had not themselves tasted the attractions of power. Whoever practises the art of this insurrection may in no way appeal to Engels or Marx. Such an uprising could never emerge out of the spontaneous action of the masses, and, as Trotsky himself shows, an essential condition for its success was the deception of the masses regarding the aim of the action and the lulling of other socialists, with whom a part of the Bolsheviks engaged in friendly negotiations while at the same time the other

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Marx and Engels, 1992, p. 17.

part brought up machine guns against them. Trotsky takes it upon himself to sneer at the Mensheviks because they trusted in the honesty of the Bolsheviks.

What took place in October 1917 in St. Petersburg was precisely not a spontaneous uprising of the masses, like that in February of the same year, but a coup d'état, which Lenin and Trotsky themselves staged, entirely in the old Russian manner. It is the art of such coups d'état that Trotsky is thinking of, and he understands them better than anyone else. His success does not prove that this is the way to socialism which the proletariat has to follow everywhere, but only that in many things Russia is still no further advanced than it was under Catherine II.

It is evidence of Trotsky's military cretinism that he imagines that you need only to know the manual for such insurrections to be able to produce them as you like, anywhere and at any time. If the world revolution has still not happened, this is evidently due to the fact that the manual is not ready yet.

He does not see that the success of the coup d'état in 1917 was due to conditions of a quite specific type which existed only in Russia at that time and which do not exist today in any country in the world, least of all in the capitalist world. It shows an incredible narrowness of vision to think that any lessons for the international proletariat can be gained from the arts of the October overthrow [*Umsturz*] of 1917.

Up to today, it still has not registered in Trotsky's consciousness what the real lessons to be drawn from this coup are. He thinks: 'For the study of the very laws and methods of proletarian revolution, there is, up to the present, no more important and profound source than our October experience'.¹² However, for him the proletarian revolution is identical with the 'armed seizure of power'.

Seizure of power by whom? By the proletariat? Trotsky himself holds that the Russian proletariat is incapable of maintaining state power. He speaks only of the 'organising of the proletarian *vanguard*'¹³ for the armed insurrection. By that he means the Communist Party. But this was itself split in October, as Trotsky shows. At that time, apart from Lenin and Trotsky, almost all the leaders of Bolshevism harboured doubts about the insurrection. So in the end the 'proletarian revolution' is reduced to the seizure of power by the commanders of the vanguard: Lenin and Trotsky.

Was that why all the thinkers and fighters of Russian socialism from Chernyshevsky to Plekhanov struggled, and why all its countless martyrs shed their blood, in order to provide Lenin and Trotsky with absolute power? No, they wanted to free Russia and to establish the conditions there which would make it possible for the proletariat to develop the strength and maturity that would enable it to free itself.

¹² Trotsky, Document 1, p. 88.

¹³ Trotsky, Document 1, p. 95 [Kautsky's emphasis].

In October 1917, the majority of the Bolsheviks themselves still knew that this was the task of the proletarian revolution, and for that reason they were against the seizure of power that Lenin and Trotsky planned; not because they were in general against the seizure of power by the proletariat, which would be nonsense, but because they were against the type of seizure of power planned by those two men, since they foresaw that only evil could arise from this for Russia and for its proletariat, as is proved by statements quoted by Trotsky from Zinoviev, Lozovsky and others, the 'experienced revolutionaries, Old Bolsheviks', whom Trotsky accuses of having adopted an essentially Social-Democratic position in this 'most critical period'.¹⁴

It was the position that the entire socialist and revolutionary movement had adopted up until then. Only when they got their hands on power did those vacillating Bolsheviks forget, like so many victorious revolutionaries before them who became intoxicated with power, their own past and all knowledge of what inspired them when they themselves had to conduct difficult struggles against the existing power.

For Lenin and Trotsky, during the October days, it was basically a question only of personal power, not the seizure of power by the proletariat.

Trotsky repeatedly points out that Lenin at that time rightly said: *Now or never*.¹⁵ And, in point of fact, he may have been right in this if the aim was only to capture all power for Lenin. For that, the conditions were perhaps present only in the chaos of October 1917. Once this critical moment had passed, it would perhaps not have been possible again for Lenin to capture absolute power for himself. But from the standpoint of the seizure of power by the *proletariat* in October, it would be ridiculous to say: '*Now or never!*' In all industrialised countries the proletariat must, along with the development of industry itself, inexorably gain in strength and maturity, and its eventual victory is assured. And this victory, which will arise from the struggles of countless millions, cannot depend on whether or not any single individual has caught the right moment for it.

Incidentally, what a contradiction it is, on the one hand, to say that in Russia there was only one special situation, a single moment, which would never be repeated, for the insurrection that would capture power for the Communists, whereas, on the other hand, the right moment for the world revolution recurs constantly!

In 1917, on the basis of his utopianism, which it now turns out was as primitive as it was extreme, Lenin could still think that if only he conquered power everything would be won for the proletariat. He could just knock together the new society with a few heavy hammer blows.

14 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 134.

15 Trotsky, Document 1, p. 114, 115.

But to believe today, after the experience of the last seven years, that the central problem of socialism consists only in the question of how one conquers power, without any consideration of the methods, the aims and the conditions of this conquest – to speak today of the lessons of the 'October experiment' and only discuss the question of the military victory of one's own sect, or rather its high command, without the slightest reference to the economic and social conditions of that time, is to demonstrate an almost frightening military cretinism. The military are concerned only with defeating the enemy, destroying its resources and imposing on their own army the blind obedience of all subordinates. They are not concerned with anything more.

And that is exactly how Trotsky thinks today. It does not occur to him that it is necessary to examine whether those within his own ranks whom he accuses of being 'Social Democrats', 'Mensheviks' and 'accomplices of the bourgeoisie' were perhaps fundamentally correct when they saw, in a coup d'état against fraternal socialist parties, a danger to the progress of Russia and its proletariat, even if today they are ashamed of the good sense they showed at that time. Perhaps today the facts speak a language which cannot be misunderstood and which clearly shows what a 'blind alley', to use Veresaev's words, Russia and its working classes have been led into by the 'October experiment'. The present holders of power there still do not understand any of this. While they resort to contradictory methods, seeking to win the trust and confidence of capitalists and governments abroad in order to get hold of loans, and at the same time making propaganda for the overthrow of these governments and capitalists through the world revolution, they get ever deeper into the swamp.

Anyone who looks at things from an economic standpoint will find that the 'October experiment' has by no means been a success. Militarily, however, it has succeeded. Every opponent inside Russia has been defeated, and the blind obedience of subordinates has been fully imposed, not only among the general population but also in the Red Army and the Communist Party itself.

And today Trotsky will nevertheless no longer think quite so favourably of the 'October experiment' as he did a few months ago, when he wrote his latest works. And he may perhaps discover some lessons in this experiment which have hitherto eluded him.

For him, the central problem during the October days was the seizure of *power*, of *personal* power. It appears to have been a complete success: Lenin and Trotsky became autocrats to whom everyone submitted. Trotsky himself made the greatest contribution to the construction of that terrible apparatus of domination whose machinery crushes anyone who is prepared to defy the ruling elite. But lo and behold! Because of purely personal differences, or so it would seem, the worshipper of power comes into conflict with his colleagues who, after Lenin's withdrawal from the affairs of government, have made themselves at home at the head of the state, and he himself is then seized by this merciless machinery. To such perfect working order has he brought

it. What a success! What was for him the means to total power has condemned him to complete powerlessness. His 'arts' have thus brought power to those whom he himself criticises as 'Mensheviks' and 'opportunists'. And therefore also as robbers and murderers!

Perhaps Trotsky will now begin to think a little less contemptuously of democracy.

That a man like Trotsky, who for all his weaknesses nevertheless stands head and shoulders above his Bolshevik opponents and who has done so much for their state machinery, should be disposed of so rapidly and so easily is most surprising. That Patroclus and even Achilles should fall and Thersites return has of course often occurred in history; and it has not infrequently happened that in a duel between Thersites and Achilles the former has won by some dirty trick. But that Achilles should challenge Thersites to a duel and at the first sign of resistance lay down his arms without a fight – that has hardly any precedent in history. And just as rarely has it occurred that, if Achilles is banished, the whole army of his comrades who have fought beside him lines up almost unanimously behind Thersites and enthusiastically agrees. This phenomenon is a serious symptom of the inner weakness of Bolshevism. It appears so serious because it is perhaps the most prominent example, but it is in no way the only one of its kind. In a social structure as decayed as Soviet Russia, conflicts between members of the ruling caste are inevitable. But until now every attempt by a former champion of the Communist Party to raise criticisms of the government has ended with the critic being transferred to some sinecure and condemned to silence. And each of them has quietly accepted this.

That shows that not only has the Medusa's head of the Terror and the Cheka petrified the mass of the population but it also seems to have killed off all independent life among those who hold it in their hands. It has transformed the champions of the ruling party itself into slaves and subservient creatures.

That is very convenient for the existing rulers, as long as everything goes smoothly. But so much the worse for the regime if it enters into a crisis that threatens its existence. Then it will look around in vain for defenders. Does anyone imagine that those who allow a Trotsky to fall without a word of opposition will risk their lives, if one day it should come to that, in order to save a Zinoviev?

The ease of Trotsky's suppression shows that the regiment of Bolshevism has very few men with backbone in its ranks. It is a colossus with feet of clay, which can no longer survive any serious crisis, and which is moreover incapable of any regeneration from within.

The first deep-going crisis that it meets must end in catastrophe for it.

Glossary

Achilles. Homer's fatally flawed hero, who fights long and invincibly for the Greeks, until, after being forced to give up the woman he had taken as war-prize, he refuses to fight for them anymore. Achilles permits his close friend Patroclus to fight, even providing his own armour. Hector kills Patroclus, mistaking him for Achilles. Achilles kills Hector in retaliation, after which his days are numbered, meeting death at the hands of Paris who knows his one weak spot. In this tale, Thersites, a common soldier, is the gadfly of the Greek kings and a constant critic of the Trojan wars and especially of Achilles, whose criticism however is largely impotent. He meets his end at the hands of Achilles. Such classical analogies were frequently used in the exchanges of the participants in the 'literary discussion,' and they are very much in the tradition of Karl Marx and later Marxists who used them to convey the timeless aspect of their musings on the nature and fate of their fellow men.

The **Agrarian Union** or the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union (*B'lgarski zemedelski narodnen s'юз*, or BZNS) was a political party representing peasant interests in Bulgaria. The Agrarian Union was founded in 1899 as a professional organisation for peasants only, although in 1901 it became a political party, the BZNS. Its most prominent figure was Aleksandar Stamboliiski who became its leader in 1918. With the destruction caused by the First World War, Stamboliiski was able to form a BZNS-controlled government. Its main rival was the Bulgarian Communist Party (БКП). The BZNS government became increasingly unpopular because of its heavy-handed rule, and on 9 June 1923 a bloc of military factions deposed the regime through a coup d'état. Stamboliiski was murdered, and a military regime under Aleksandar Tsankov took over. The BZNS was persecuted but survived, and participated in agricultural policy in Bulgaria until 1989. See also **Bulgarian Communist Party; September Antifascist Uprising**.

Grigorii Alekseevich **Aleksinskii** (1879–1967) was a Russian revolutionary of noble background who graduated from Moscow University in 1904. He moved closer to the Bolsheviks in 1905 and joined the CC of the RSDRP, participating in the Bolshevik press. He joined the Second State Duma in 1907, and the Bolshevik wing of the Social-Democratic fraction. During the Reaction, he was a Recallist, and an organiser of the Left Bolshevik *Vpered* group. He took part in the Stuttgart and Basel Congresses of the II International in 1907 and 1912 respectively. In 1909, he fled abroad after the dispersal of the Duma, and helped organise the party school on the island of Capri. He adopted a patriotic stance during the First World War (in the polemic, the term 'social chauvinist' was used to describe this stance). After accusing Parvus of collaborating with the German General Staff in 1915, Aleksinskii was expelled from work in the SD and SR

press, and began working with the monarchist newspaper, *Russkaia volia*. He returned to Russia in April 1917, joining the Menshevik *Edinstvo* group. In July, he accused Lenin of state treason for accepting money from Germany before his return to Russia. He later supported the Kornilov affair, protested against the Bolshevik seizure of power, and was arrested in 1918. On his release later that year, he fled abroad, where he participated in anti-Bolshevik publications like *Obshchee delo* and *Russkaia gazeta*. In 1920, Aleksinskii was declared an enemy of the people. He is buried at the émigré cemetery of Ste-Geneviève-des-Bois on the outskirts of Paris. See also **Left Deviations; Russian Social Democracy**.

Alexandrinsky Theatre (also Alexandrinka) in St. Petersburg is the oldest Russian national theatre, having been founded by the Empress Elizabeth's decree on 30 August 1756. The Democratic Conference met here in September 1917. See also **Democratic Conference**.

Andrei Andreevich **Andreev** (1895–1971) joined the Bolshevik Party in 1914 and was active in the Petrograd Union of Metalworkers (*Soiuz Metallistov*). He worked on local party matters in the Urals and the Ukraine from 1917 to 1919, and supported some of Trotsky's positions in the early 1920s. At the time of the 'literary discussion', he was chair of the CC of the Union of Railway Workers (*Vikzhel'*). He was a Politburo member from 1932 to 1952 and worked in a range of party and state organisations, including the Worker-Peasant Inspectorate (*Rabkrin*), the Organisational Bureau (*Orgburo*) of the party, and the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. He played a prominent role in pursuing the purges in the 1930s. See also **Worker and Peasant Inspectorate; Vikzhel'**.

Anti-Fascist Day was named by the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) in 1923 in an effort to rally the Left against the growing influence of the Nazi Party particularly in some parts of the army and amidst a real fear that the Right was preparing to overthrow the Weimar Republic. In early July, Heinrich Brandler, leader of the KPD, called for a national Anti-Fascist Day of demonstrations to be held on 29 July. The planned demonstrations were banned by some SPD-controlled provincial governments in Germany, and Brandler quickly found himself isolated from both Right and Left in the KPD. The Executive Committee of the Comintern (ИККИ) advised him to abandon the planned demonstrations. Mass meetings took place in their stead, but the Anti-Fascist Day became a symbol of the KPD's unreadiness to act aggressively in defence of revolution in Germany. See also **Brandler; Comintern; Communist Party of Germany; German Revolution of 1918–19; German Revolution of 1923**.

The Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rightists and Trotskyites. See **Show Trials**.

April Conference. See **Russian Social Democracy.**

The **April Theses** (*Aprél'skie tezisý*) comprised the post-February 1917 programme of action of the Bolsheviks, as articulated by Lenin on his return in April 1917 to Petrograd from Switzerland in the sealed train through Germany. The theses were published in *Pravda* on 7 April. In his ten points, Lenin demanded *inter alia* that no quarter be given to revolutionary defensism, nor should any support be given to the Provisional Government. He also called for nationalisation of all lands, and for all power to be handed over to the Soviets. In the face of prominent and stiff opposition within his own party to his theses, Lenin began an active campaign to defend and explain them. Kamenev criticised them in an article on 8 April in *Pravda*. Lenin persisted, and on 14 April the Petrograd City Conference of Bolsheviks approved the theses as the basis of its future work. Local Bolshevik organisations quickly followed suit. At the Seventh All-Russian (April) Conference of the RSDRP(b) in late April, a majority of delegates supported the theses as the basis for the party's work. The theses were sharply criticised in liberal and moderate socialist circles. By the time of the 'literary discussion', the April Theses were acquiring the status of canonical texts in Bolshevik mythology, particularly as the Lenin Cult took shape after Lenin's death in January 1924. See also **Lenin; Revolutionary Defensism.**

Artemovtsy may refer to those who identified with Old Bolshevik revolutionary Fedor Andreevich Sergeev (1883–1921), better known as Comrade Artem (*Tovarishch Artem*). Of peasant stock, Artem joined the RSDRP in 1902 and was active both inside the Russian Empire and in the emigration in legal and illegal activity. In 1917, he took up key positions in Donetsk party and state organisations and was active in rebuilding the coal-mining industry. He died in a famous high-speed train prototype accident in 1921 (the *aerovagon*, an airplane propeller-driven train carriage), and was interred in the Kremlin Wall. Several cities, mines, ships were renamed and various monuments constructed in his honour.

August Bloc. See **Russian Social Democracy.**

Aurora (*Avrora*) was a Russian cruiser that acquired iconic status for its part in the October Revolution. A single blank shot from the Aurora, anchored on the Neva River in October 1917, was mythicised as the 'signal' for the start of the Storming of the Winter Palace. It is now a floating museum in St. Petersburg. See also **Finland Station; Lena massacre; Peter and Paul Fortress; Sealed Train; Sarai and Shalash; Smolnyi; Winter Palace; Zaria Svobody.**

Avanti! (*Forward!*) began life in 1896 in Rome as the official newspaper of the Italian Socialist Party (*Partito Socialista Italiano*, PSI). It was edited for a time after the Italo-Turkish war of 1911–12 by Benito Mussolini, until his ouster from the party over his dissenting views. Its headquarters were destroyed by his Blackshirts in April 1919, and the newspaper was banned by the fascist government in 1926. It was produced in exile in Paris and then in Zurich, returning to Italy after Mussolini's fall.

Richard Avenarius (1843–96) was a German philosopher who taught in Switzerland. He developed the theory of knowledge known as empiriocriticism which set as philosophy's main task the development of a concept of the world based on pure experience. This philosophy, like that of Ernst Mach and Friedrich Ostwald, was heavily criticised by Lenin and other Bolsheviks for its 'subjectivity', namely that thought and sensation guide how the material world is perceived (idealism) rather than the material world guiding thought and sensation (materialism).

Leopold Leonidovich Averbakh (1903–37), a member of the VKP(b) from 1919, was active in the Communist youth movement after the October Revolution both in Soviet Russia and abroad. He was married to the daughter of V.D. Bonch-Bruевич, an Old Bolshevik and a leader of the October insurrection. His sister, Ida Averbakh, was married to Genrikh Iagoda, who was at that time working his way through the ranks of the Cheka and later the OGPU. Averbakh joined the Komsomol in 1919, and edited the organisation's newspaper *Molodaia Gvardiia* (*Young Guard*) from 1922–4, having been recommended to the post by Trotsky on Averbakh's return from abroad. He was active in party work from 1924–5 in the Urals, where he edited *Ural'skii rabochii* (*Urals Worker*). He helped found and collaborated in the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers (*Rossiiskaia assotsiatsiia proletarskikh pisatelei* or RAPP) from 1925–32. He was arrested on April 4, 1937 and shot on 14 August of the same year. He was posthumously rehabilitated. See also **Cheka**; **Show Trials**.

Nikolai Avilov, party name Gleb or N. Glebov (1887–1937 [variously –1942]), joined the Bolsheviks in 1904, and was active in Moscow and the Urals during the 1905 revolution. As the 'literary discussion' revealed, this did not automatically confer revolutionary pedigree, Zinoviev listing him, together with I.P. Gol'denberg and Vladimir Voitinskii, as Old Bolsheviks who fell under the spell of non-Bolshevik tendencies in the course of 1917. He was arrested at various times for his work in underground print shops, and worked for the Bolshevik *Pravda* in 1913 and 1914. He took part in the February Revolution, and in October 1917 represented the trade unions in the Military Revolutionary Committee (*Voenno-revoliutsionnyi komitet*, VRK) and helped set up the Red Guards. After October, he was the first Commissar of the People's Commissariat for Post and Telegraph (*Narodnyi komissariat pocht i telegrafov*). He worked in various state, party

and economic posts during the 1920s. He participated in the intraparty opposition. In 1936, he was arrested for terrorist activities, sentenced, and shot. He was rehabilitated in 1956. See also **Gol'denberg**; **Military Revolutionary Committee**; **Voitinskii**.

Pavel **Axelrod**, born Pinkhus Borukh (1850–1928) was a populist, a founder of Russian Social Democracy, and a Menshevik leader. He was arrested and exiled abroad in 1874 for his populist activities. He returned illegally from Berlin and Geneva in 1879. In 1883, he co-founded (with Georgii Plekhanov and Vera Zasulich) the Marxist Emancipation of Labour (*Osvobozhdenie Truda*) group in Switzerland. In 1900, they all joined forces with a younger generation of revolutionaries, notably Lenin, Aleksandr Potresov, and Iulii Martov, to edit the Marxist newspaper, *Iskra*, from 1900–3. Axelrod sided with the Menshevik faction in the split at the Second Congress of the RSDRP in 1903. He supported the Allied Powers during the First World War, and initially advocated SD support for their patriotic war efforts. Lenin called him a leader of Russian Kautskyists. At the Zimmerwald Conference in 1915, he argued against Lenin's policy of transforming the imperialist war into a civil war, advocating instead a policy of immediate peace without annexations and indemnities. Axelrod returned to Russia from Zurich in May 1917 as part of the returning group of émigrés who traversed Germany in a sealed train. He supported collaboration with the Provisional Government in 1917. He vehemently condemned the Bolshevik seizure of power in October, and sent an open letter to Martov that was published first in the emigration in 1921, inveighing against the 'Communist mission of Bolshevism'. He spent the rest of his life rallying the socialist opposition against the Bolsheviks, and died in Berlin in 1928. In the 'literary discussion', the derogatory and dismissive term 'Axelrod and Co.' was sometimes used to tar Trotsky with pro-Menshevik sympathies at key moments in his political career. See also **Iskra**; **Kautsky**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

N. **Babakhan** worked in the Kazan' party organisation and wrote on the pre-revolutionary history of the Soviets and on current politics in the 1920s.

Bag-men (*meshochniki*). See **NEP**.

Angelica **Balabanova** (1878–1965) joined the Italian Socialist Party in 1900, moving to the left in WWI when she took part in the Zimmerwald movement. She joined the Russian Bolshevik Party in 1917, but soon became disillusioned with Soviet socialism. She was secretary of the Comintern in 1919, but returned to Italy in 1922 after criticising Bolshevism. Fascism forced her to flee to Switzerland, where she edited the newspaper *Avanti!* With the outbreak of WWII, she moved to exile in New York City. See also **Comintern**; **Zimmerwald Conference**.

Stanley **Baldwin** (1867–1947) was a British Conservative politician who was serving as Prime Minister at the time of the ‘literary discussion’. He advocated introducing protectionist tariffs as a way of combatting unemployment in Britain. While the previous Labour government was negotiating with the Soviet government over the Russian Treaties (a set of treaties designed to resurrect the international trade interrupted by the October Revolution), Baldwin voted against the government over these Treaties, helping to precipitate the collapse of the government in October 1924 and his ascent to the office of Prime Minister. See also **British Labour Party**; **Chamberlain**; **Macdonald**.

Ferdinand August **Bebel** (1840–1913) was a German Marxist and co-founder of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, SPD) which emerged in 1890 out of the Socialist Workers’ Party of Germany (SAPD). He worked almost exclusively through parliament, first in North Germany, and later in the Reichstag. He came under attack at party meetings in the early 1890s from ‘young’ socialists who wanted to replace parliamentary action with plans for a total overthrow of the state. See also **Bernstein**; **Cunow**; **David**; **German Revolution of 1918–19**.

Eduard **Bernstein**, a German socialist who advocated the revision (*Überprüfung*) of Marxism on the grounds that some aspects of Marxist revolutionary thought had been rendered inapplicable by the evolution of capitalism, democracy, and the labour movement. Bernsteinian Revisionism posited that the labour movement and bourgeois democracy had grown to such an extent that gradual development towards socialism had become possible through a collaboration between the working classes and the progressive bourgeoisie. This flew in the face of more radical calls, particularly from Russian Marxists, for class struggle, revolution, and the dictatorship of the proletariat. Terms like ‘Bernsteinism’ or ‘Bernsteinians’ (*Bernshteinianty*) featured in the ‘literary discussion’ as dismissive, reductive epithets for the so-called ‘opportunistic’, ‘reformist’ trends in international Social Democracy that were felt to stand in the way of revolutionary socialism. Bernstein’s collection of articles *The Preconditions of Socialism*, first published in German in 1899, was generally taken as the embodiment of this ‘opportunism’. See also **Economism**.

Aleksandr Il’ich **Bezymenskii** (1898–1973) joined the RSDRP(b) in 1916 and took part in the October Revolution in Petrograd. He was a co-founder of the Komsomol, and a Soviet poet. At the start of 1924, he was one of eight signatories to a declaration that Trotsky’s writings were not harming the Communist youth, as was being asserted in the context of the internal party ‘discussions’ of that period. He later joined the chorus of Trotsky’s critics. See also **Komsomol**.

Leonida **Bissolati** (1857–1920) was an Italian socialist who practiced law in Cremona. At various times in the first decade of the twentieth century, he was in charge of *Avanti!* (*Forward!*), the official organ of the Italian Socialist Party. In 1912, he was expelled from the party for refusing to oppose Italy's war on Turkey for the conquest of Libya. He later founded the Italian Reform Socialist Party (*Partito Socialista Riformista Italiano*, PSRI), and supported Italy's entry into WWI, for which he earned Lenin's opprobrium as an 'opportunist'. See *Avanti!*; *Balabanova*; *Bordiga*; *Serrati*.

Black Hundreds (*Chernosotentsy*) were staunch defenders of the Romanovs and tsarism. They were known for Russocentrism, anti-semitism, and xenophobia. In the context of the 'literary discussion', the term was used to disparage anyone on the extreme right of the political spectrum. See also *Boulangisme*; *Markov*; *Pleve*; *Purishkevich*.

Dimitar **Blagoev** (1856–1924), a Bulgarian who studied at St. Petersburg University, participated actively in the work of the *People's Will* (*Narodnaia Volia*). He soon deserted Populism in favour of Marxism. Blagoev organised one of the first Social-Democratic circles (the Blagoev group) in St. Petersburg. In 1884, he was arrested and exiled to Bulgaria where he established the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party (*Balgarska Sotsialdemokraticheska Partiya*, BSDP). In 1903, the party split into 'narrow Socialists' (*tesniaki*) and 'broad Socialists' (*shirokie*), Blagoev becoming head of the '*tesniaki*' who pursued an orthodox Marxist line. Under Blagoev, the *tesniaki* split with the Second International. In 1919, his party joined the Comintern and became the Bulgarian Communist Party (BKP) which he headed. Notwithstanding his admiration for the October Revolution and his general support for Leninist Bolshevik positions, Blagoev was unsure whether Bulgaria was ripe for revolution yet, and under his guidance the BKP remained neutral in the military coup of 9 June 1923 in Bulgaria. Despite pressure from party organisations to counter the coup in June and again in September, and particularly from his fellow *tesniak* Vasilii Kolarov who was backed by the Comintern, Blagoev's party was less than wholeheartedly behind the counter-coup, and it failed. Blagoev died in Sofia in 1924. See also *Kabakchiev*; *Bulgarian Communist Party*; *Kolarov*; *Populism*; *September Antifascist Uprising*.

Louis Auguste **Blanqui** (1805–81) was a French revolutionary and a member of the Carbonari society since 1824. He was injured in street fighting in the upheavals under King Charles x of France in the late 1820s. He participated in the July Revolution in France in 1830, and was imprisoned repeatedly for championing republicanism under Louis Philippe. He was released during the 1848 revolution, advocated violent republicanism, for which he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in 1849. He escaped abroad from a second term of imprisonment in 1865, and returned four years later during the general amnesty. Blanqui's radicalism and his readiness to resort to

violence brought him admirers and detractors alike. In the Soviet lexicon, Blanquism referred to the doctrine that a socialist revolution must be carried out by a small group of well-organised and conspiratorial revolutionaries who would organise a coup d'état and then use the state to introduce socialism. Bolsheviks criticised it for its apparent underestimation of the revolutionary potential of the proletariat. It was used as a term of abuse by Lenin's critics to describe Leninism, and Trotsky was also accused of referring to Lenin as a Blanquist.

Blanquism. See **Blanqui**.

Sarkis Goikovich **Bogdat'ev**, born Bagdat'ian (1887–1949), was a member of the RSDRP from 1903, and joined the Petersburg Committee of the party in 1908. After the February Revolution, he put out a leaflet with the slogan 'Down with the Provisional Government!' in the face of the resolution of the CC of the party about the poor timing of this demand. He was arrested by the Provisional Government for participating in the July Days. He was engaged in party and economic work after October. See also **Russian Social Democracy**.

Gleb Ivanovich **Bokii** (1879–1937), a Ukrainian who participated in the Union of Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class (*Soiuz bor'by za osvobozhdenie rabochego klass*), joined the RSDRP in 1900. He took part in the 1905 Revolution in St. Petersburg. In March 1917, he joined the Petrograd Committee of the RSDRP(b) and was active in the armed insurrection in October in the Military Revolutionary Committee (VRK). He was in the Left Communists in 1918. During the Civil War, he helped organise the Red Terror, joined the Cheka in 1921, and pursued a long career in the political police force in Soviet Russia. He was arrested during the purges of the NKVD in May 1937, charged with treason and counter-revolutionary activity, and shot. He was rehabilitated in 1956. See also **Cheka**; **Show Trials**.

Bol'shevik (*Bolshevik*) was the theoretical and political journal of the Central Committee of the VKP(b). It began publishing biweekly in April 1924, charged with covering the current political, philosophical, and ideological issues of the day, and, in this capacity, covered the intraparty 'discussions' in the first half of the 1920s. The journal was edited by Bukharin and Kamenev, among others. From November 1952, it was renamed *Kommunist* (*Communist*). From 1991, it began to appear under the name *Svobodnaia mysl'* (*Free Thought*). See also ***Pravda***.

Bolsheviks. See **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**.

Bor'ba (*Struggle*) was established with heavy involvement from Trotsky in 1914 in St. Petersburg as a non-factional workers' journal and suffered at the hands of repression and poor material support. Only seven issues were published between February and July 1914. It drew on many of the same unifying impulses in Trotsky that had informed his earlier newspaper in Vienna, *Pravda* (*Truth*). See the **Vienna Pravda; Trotsky**.

Amadeo **Bordiga** (1875–1970) was a member of the Italian Socialist Party (Turin section) who helped found the Italian Communist Party (*Partito Comunista Italiano*, PCI) in 1921. A Left Communist, he opposed the United Front policy of the Comintern, although he remained prominent in both organisations until his arrest by fascists in 1926. On his release three years later, he was expelled from the Italian Communist Party on charges of 'Trotskyism'. He led an ultra-left sect in Italy into the 1960s. See also **Avanti!; Bissolati; Serrati; Terracini; Turati**.

Karl Ludwig **Börne**, born Loeb Baruch (1786–1837), was a German-Jewish political satirist. He was hopeful for the revolutionary changes in France and moved to Paris in 1830, where he wrote critical and satirical letters about the political situation in Germany.

Boulangisme was a *fin de siècle* French political movement derived from General Georges Boulanger. He became popular for his reforms in France but the Third Republic found his bellicose threats of coup d'état and dictatorship disquieting. In the 'literary discussion', the term was used to criticise dictatorial tendencies in the Urals Social Democratic Party in the pre-revolutionary period, and General Boulanger was cast in the mould of a Black Hundred. See also **Black Hundreds**.

Bourgeois specialists (*burzhuaiznye spetsialisty, spetsy*) referred to those skilled individuals who were held over from the pre-revolutionary economy to help administer the post-revolutionary economy and to help train 'red specialists', i.e. the ideologically more reliable managers who were eventually to replace them. Many Communists criticised the use of such individuals and were wary of their influence in the economy, although in the short term exigency outweighed such political or ideological concerns. See also **NEP**.

Boycottists (*boikotisty*). See **Left Deviations; Opposition**.

Heinrich **Brandler** (1881–1967) was a disciple of Rosa Luxemburg and president of the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) in 1921. He was expelled from the party in 1924, and then led a German 'rightist' opposition (KPO). See also **Communist Party of Germany; Comintern**.

The **British Labour Party** was established in 1900 in London at a meeting of the Trades Union. It was made up of over seventy organisations, including the Fabians, the Independent Labour Party, and major unions. It was this aspect of the party that made it rather unpalatable to many Bolsheviks, including Trotsky. Its first period in office came in 1924 when it was led by Ramsay MacDonald. It passed much social welfare legislation, and also began negotiating with the Soviet government over the Russian Treaties (a set of treaties designed to resurrect the international trade interrupted by the October Revolution). It fell from power over these treaties and because of the publication in the *Daily Mail* of the infamous forged letter from the Soviet Foreign Minister Zinoviev. This letter was used by the Conservative Party to accuse the Labour Party of having links with the Soviet Communists. During the General Election in October 1924, anti-Communist sentiment prevailed, and the Labour government fell. See also **Baldwin; Chamberlain; MacDonald**.

Isaak Izrailevich **Brodsky** (1883–1939) was a major Soviet painter in the Socialist Realist tradition. He had studied under the famous Russian painter Ilya Repin, and was Rector of the Academy of Fine Arts. He is best known for his iconic portrayals of Lenin, Stalin, Voroshilov, and for his idealised depictions of events from the October Revolution and the Civil War.

Andrei Sergeevich **Bubnov** (1884–1938) was an Old Bolshevik who joined the RSDRP in 1903. He led a life of activism and imprisonment, and in 1917 helped organise the Military Revolutionary Committee in the run-up to the October insurrection in Petrograd. He was a member of the first Politburo and took part in the Civil War. He was chairman of the All-Ukrainian Central Military Revolutionary Committee (*Vseukrainskij Tsentral'nyi voenno-revolutsionnyi komitet*) from 1918, and head of the Political Directory of the Red Army. He was a member of the group of 'Democratic Centralists' from 1920–1. In the 1920s, he became a historian of the Bolshevik Party and of the Civil War. In October 1923, Bubnov signed the Declaration of the 46, but he switched his support to Stalin in January 1924 and took an active role in the 'literary discussion' of that year. From 1925–9, he organised the struggle against Trotskyism in units of the Red Army. From 1929, he was the People's Commissar for Education (*Narodnyi kommissar prosveshcheniia*) of the RSFSR. He was arrested in October 1937, charged with anti-Soviet activity, and shot in August 1938. He was rehabilitated and restored to the party in 1956. See also **Democratic Centralists**.

Nikolai Ivanovich **Bukharin** (1888–1938) was a leading Marxist theorist, and Lenin's 'golden boy' in the party. A Bolshevik from 1906, he was a member of its Central Committee from 1917–34, and a full member of the Politburo from 1924–9. He took part in the 1905 Revolution, and during the 'doldrums' of tsarist repression he was exiled

and eventually spent periods of time in exile. In October 1916, he was in New York City, where he met Trotsky and other leading Russian revolutionaries. He participated in the armed insurrection in Moscow in October 1917. From December 1917 to February 1918, he was editor of the newspaper *Pravda*; from 1919 to 1929, a member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern; and from 1924, an editor of the journal *Bol'shevik*. Bukharin found himself in opposition to Lenin at certain junctures, notably over the Peace of Brest-Litovsk. At the time of the 'literary discussion', he was one of the powerful '*semerka*' (The Seven) that made up the Politburo. In the intraparty struggles of the mid-1920s, Bukharin sided with Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev against Trotsky. From 1929, he was prominent in the Supreme Council of the National Economy (*Vysshii Sovet Narodnogo Khoziaistvo*, or VSNKh) of the USSR. With his slogan of 'Enrichissez-vous!', Bukharin's moderate path to peasant prosperity as a prerequisite of future industrialisation in Soviet Russia soon placed him at odds with Stalin's drive for forced, mass industrialisation and collectivisation. He was expelled from the Politburo, and from his posts in *Pravda* and in the Comintern, in 1929. From 1934–7, he edited the newspaper *Izvestiia*. In February–March 1937, he was expelled from the CC and the party. He was arrested in February 1937, and tried in a show trial (the Trial of the Twenty-One) in March 1938, and shot on 15 March. He was rehabilitated on 4 February 1988 by the Supreme Court of the USSR. See also **Bol'shevik**; **Semerka**; **Show Trials**.

Sergei **Bulgakov** (1871–1944) was an economist and a lecturer at Moscow University. He was a 'legal Marxist' in the 1890s. From 1906, he adopted a religious mystical outlook, calling himself a 'Christian socialist'. He later joined the Constitutional Democratic Party and served in the Second Duma. After the February Revolution, he worked in church affairs. He emigrated in 1922 and from 1925 worked as a professor at the Bogoslovskii Institute in Paris until his death. See also **Bernstein**.

The **Bulgarian Communist Party** (*Balgarska Komunisticheska Partiia*, or ВКР) led the People's Republic of Bulgaria from 1946 until 1990. It emerged from the Bulgarian Social Democratic Workers' Party (Narrow Socialists) (*Balgarska Sotsial Demokraticheska Partiia* (*Tesniatsi*, or *Tesniaki*)), founded in 1903 after a split at the Tenth Congress of the Bulgarian Social Democratic Workers' Party between the 'narrow' (*tesnyi*) and 'broad' (*shirokii*) socialists. The *tesniaki* were led by Blagoev. The BSDWP(ns) was one of the first radical Marxist parties as distinct from the reformist Social-Democratic parties. In 1919, it renamed itself the ВКР(ns). See also **Blagoev**; **Comintern**; **Kabakchiev**; **Kolarov**; **September Antifascist Uprising**.

The '**Bulgarian Revolution of 1923**'. See **September Antifascist Uprising**.

The **Bund** (General Jewish Workers' Union in Lithuania, Poland, and Russia, *Vseobshchii evreiskii rabochii soiuz v Litve, Pol'she i Rossii*) was a secular Jewish left socialist party in the Russian Empire, founded in Vil'no in 1897 and active until 1920. A large organisation with regular congresses throughout the early twentieth century, it preceded the founding of the RSDRP, but became part of the latter. The Bund often found itself at odds with the Bolsheviks after 1903 and drew primarily on Menshevik support. It supported the February Revolution of 1917 but regarded the October Revolution as a Bolshevik coup, although after the anti-Semitic pogroms that accompanied the Civil War, the Bund fought in the Red Army on the Soviet side. These stresses led to splits in the Bund on the left side of the political spectrum. It split formally into two separate parties in April 1920, the Communist Bund (*Kombund*) and the Social Democratic Bund. A year later, the *Kombund* dissolved itself and many of its members joined the Russian Communist Party (bolshevik) (RKP(b)). See also **Liber**; **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**; **Russian Social Democracy**; **Volodarsky**.

Cadet or **junker** (*iunker*) referred to a junior officer of noble descent in Russia, who had been trained by the Russian state at various military educational establishments in the Russian Empire. They featured in the revolutionary narrative as young half-trained soldiers drafted in by the Provisional Government, along with members of the Women's Battalion of Death, to defend the Winter Palace against the Bolsheviks – and overwhelming odds – in September and October 1917. They were invoked as synonyms for the unreadiness and desperation of the Provisional Government's attempts to hold onto power, as symbols of its innate impotence.

Central Control Commission (CCC) (*Tsentral'naia Kontrol'naia Komissiiia*, or TsKK) was set up under the RKP(b) in 1920 as the highest supervisory organ in the new Soviet state. It was responsible for ensuring the unity of the party and combatting any anti-party groups and tendencies. The concomitant state organ, the Worker and Peasant Inspectorate (*Rabkrin*), was folded into it in 1923. See also **Worker and Peasant Inspectorate**.

All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (*Vsesoiuznyi Tsentral'nyi Sovet Professional'nykh Soiuzov*, or VTsSPS) was responsible for designing the economic plans in Soviet Russia. It was elected in June 1917 at an All-Russian Conference of Trade Unions to coordinate trade unions which had been revived for the first time in a decade by the February Revolution. In the pre-October period, it was dominated by SRS, Mensheviks, and *mezhraintsy*, although it also had Bolshevik representation. It had neither the resources nor the organisation to play a major part in the October Revolution. While VTsSPS survived into the Soviet era, with Zinoviev as its chairman in 1918, it found an ideological competitor in the form of the Red International of Trade Unions (*Krasnyi*

Internatsional Profsoiuzov, or Profintern), whose founding congress was held in July 1921. Unlike VTsSPS, it espoused explicitly political revolutionary aspirations. See also **Mezhraiontsy**.

The All-Russian **Central Executive Committee of the Soviets** (*Vserossiiskii Tsentral'nyi Ispolnitel'nyi Komitet Sovetov*, VTsIK, or TsIK) was the highest legislative body of the RSFSR, and functioned from 1917 to 1937. It was the responsible legislative organ between Congresses. It was elected at the All-Russian Congress of Soviets in Petrograd on 3–24 June 1917. Kamenev chaired TsIK from 9–21 November 1917. With the adoption of the 1936 Soviet Constitution, the TsIK was replaced by the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR (*Verkhovnyi sovet RSFSR*).

Neville **Chamberlain** (1869–1940) was a British Conservative politician who became infamous for his policy of appeasement towards Nazi Germany while Prime Minister from 1937–40. In 1923, he was Minister of Health, successfully introducing reform measures from 1924–9. He later became Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was known for a certain arrogance towards the Labour Party oppositionists. See also **Baldwin**; **British Labour Party**; **Macdonald**.

The **Change of Signposts** movement (*Smenovekhovstvo*) gathered around the émigré journal *Smena vekh* (*Change of Signposts*) that began publishing in Prague in 1921. This publication's name invoked an earlier philosophical journal, *Vekhi* (*Signposts*), which had published in 1909. The *Smenovekhovtsy* included amid their ranks prominent Mensheviks, Kadets and Octobrists, and advocated supporting the October Revolution and the Civil War, despite their personal and political misgivings with Lenin. They counselled returning to Russia to wait out the demise of the Soviet state, a decision that aroused predictable consternation within the émigré community.

Nikolai Pavlovich **Chaplin** (1902–38) was a member of the Smolensk organisation of the RKP(b) from 1919, and became prominent in the Komsomol, serving as General Secretary of its Central Committee from 1924 to 1928. He was also a member of the TsIK sssr and VTsIK during the same years. In 1928–9, he attended courses in Marxism. In 1931–3, he was a member of the Presidium of Tsentrosoiuz. From 1933 to 1936, he headed the political section of the Kirov Railway, and was awarded the Order of Lenin in 1936. He wrote on the history of the Komsomol and on youth issues in general. He was arrested in 1937 and shot on 23 September 1938. See also **Komsomol**.

Chatskii. See Petr Abramovich **Garvi**.

Cheka (*Vserossiiskaia chrezvychainaia komissiia po bor'be s kontrrevoliutisiei i sabotzhem i spekulatsiei*, the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Struggle against Counter-Revolution, Sabotage and Speculation) was established under the Sovnarkom in December 1917 and operated until 1922. The Cheka was the organ of Red Terror during the Civil War designed explicitly to safeguard the dictatorship of the proletariat in Soviet Russia, and was chaired, for the most part, by Dzerzhinsky. The Cheka was involved in many brutal actions, causing it to be, it has been said, a focus of popular dissatisfaction. It was abolished in February 1922, and the GPU (*Gosudarstvennoe politicheskoe upravlenie*, the State Political Administration), set up under the NKVD (*Narodnyi komissariat vnutrennykh del*, Ministry of Internal Affairs), assumed many of its functions and personnel. See also **Dzerzhinsky**; **Opposition**; **Show Trials**.

Viktor Mikhailovich **Chernov** (1873–1952), leader of the Socialist Revolutionary Party (PSR), was a professional revolutionary from 1894. After the tsarist concessions in the wake of the 1905 Revolution, Chernov held a congress of the PSR in Finland in December 1905, where he wrote the party platform calling for a two-stage revolution, democratic and then socialist, as well as abolition of land property rights, promotion of democratic village communes and the right of peasants to their own crops. He spent the years of the First World War in exile in Europe, where he helped to publish anti-war newspapers like *Mysl'* (*Thought*) and *Zhizn'* (*Life*). He returned to Russia after the February Revolution of 1917 to serve as Minister of Agriculture in Lvov's and Kerensky's Provisional Governments. After the October insurrection, his Right SRs won a plurality of seats in the Constituent Assembly in January 1918, which he chaired until its immediate dissolution by the Bolsheviks. Fleeing the Red Terror, he joined the SR Central Committee in the anti-Bolshevik and short-lived *Komuch* (*Committee of the Constituent Assembly*) government in Samara, although he tried to define a third way through the Reds and Whites in the Civil War. When this course failed, he fled abroad, living the rest of his life in Europe, and eventually moving to New York. See also **Constituent Assembly**; **Kerensky**; **Natanson**; **Populism**; **Socialist Revolutionary Party**; **Spiridonova**.

Nikolai **Chernyshevsky** (1828–89) was a revolutionary and socialist whose writings were very influential on leading Communists. A self-professed atheist, and a founder of Populism, he edited the literary journal *Sovremennik* (*Contemporary*) from 1853–62. He underwent a mock execution in 1862, and was in prison from 1864–72, and in Siberian exile from 1872–83. Chernyshevsky's personal biography and his 1863 novel *What Is to Be Done?*, written while in prison in the Peter and Paul Fortress, were both inspirations to later Russian revolutionaries, notably Lenin. In the person of his novel's hero, Rakhmetov, revolutionaries found a seductive idealisation of the revolutionary ascetic, abstemious in his habits, and wholly devoted to the revolutionary cause. See also **Populism**.

A *chinovnik* was a pre-revolutionary civil servant or bureaucrat in Russia. It became a less than flattering term for a pen-pusher in the Soviet era.

Nikolai Semenovich ('Karlo') **Chkheidze** (1864–1926) was a Menshevik leader in Georgia and Russia, and helped found the Social-Democratic movement in the Caucasus. He was a Menshevik deputy in the Third and Fourth Dumas, and a member of the Supreme Council of the Masonic 'Great East of the Peoples of Russia' (*Velikii Vostok narodov Rossii*) from 1912 to 1916. After February 1917, he was both a member of the Provisional Committee of the State Duma and the first chairman of the Petrograd Soviet. In 1918, he was elected chair of the Constituent Assembly in Georgia. When the Bolsheviks occupied Georgia in 1921, he emigrated to France. He committed suicide in Paris in 1926. See also **Mensheviks**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

Cicero (106 BC–43 BC) was a Roman philosopher and politician known for his oratorical skills. After the death of Julius Caesar, he was involved in the struggle for power against Mark Antony, was ultimately censured as an enemy of the state, and murdered. The 'literary discussion' referred to Trotsky as the 'Menshevik Cicero'.

Political **commissars** (*komissary, politkomy*) were assigned by the RSDRP(b) to oversee and supervise military units on the eve of the October Revolution. They had first appeared after the February Revolution of 1917 in order to vet the orders and reliability of the old tsarist officers who had continued their careers under the new Provisional Government regime.

Committees of the Village Poor (*Komitety krest'ianskoi bednoty, or kombedy*) were set up during War Communism and charged with distributing grain, assisting local food-supply, and redistributing the 'surpluses' from kulaks to poor peasants. By 1918, 122,000 committees were set up across Russia. See also **War Communism**.

Comintern, Communist International, or Third International (*Komintern, Kommunisticheskii Internatsional, 3-i Internatsional*) was an international organisation uniting various communist parties around the world from 1919 to 1943. It was founded on 4 March 1919, on the initiative of the RKP(b) and Lenin, to spread and co-ordinate revolutionary socialism throughout the world. Its highest body was the Executive Committee (*Ispolnitel'nyi Komitet Kominterna, ИККИ*). The Comintern was seen as a corrective to the Second (Socialist) International, which had been irrevocably split by the stances taken by its member parties towards the First World War. The Third Congress of the Communist International, held in Moscow from 22 June to 12 July 1921, was attended by 605 delegates from 103 parties and organisations. It adopted the tactic of the 'United Worker Front' and the goal of exporting the October Revolution. Uprisings all across

Europe had raised the delegates' hopes for a European-wide revolution, but their defeat had helped the capitalist governments reassert themselves. The Congress resolved to create an International Association of Red (Revolutionary) Trade Unions (*Mezhdunarodnoe ob'edinenie krasnykh (revoliutsionnykh) profsoiuzov*) as an alternative to Social-Democratic trade unions. The founding congress of the Red International of Trade Unions (*Krasnyi internatsional profsoiuzov*, Profintern) took place in Moscow in July 1921. The Fourth Congress of the Comintern took place from 9 November to 5 December 1922 in Petrograd and Moscow, and was attended by delegates from 66 parties and organisations from 58 countries. The Congress set up the International Organisation to Aid the Fighters for Revolution (*Mezhdunarodnaia organizatsiia pomoshchi bortsam revoliutsii*). At the Congress, Lenin defended Soviet Russia's embrace of the New Economic Policy as a temporary retreat before a new offensive against capitalism could be undertaken. The Congress also discussed the growing danger of fascism in Europe. See also **NEP**; **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**; **Russian Social Democracy**; **Second International**; **Zinoviev**.

The **Communist Party of Germany** (*Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands*, KPD, aka the 'Spartacists') was founded in 1918 by, among others, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, left-wing members of the mass Social Democratic Party (SPD) in Germany. The KPD was committed to violent overthrow in Germany, and undertook attempts to seize power in 1919, 1920, and 1923. In January 1919, Luxemburg and Liebknecht were murdered by the Freikorps, and the party later split into two factions, the KPD and the Communist Workers' Party of Germany (*Kommunistische Arbeiterpartei Deutschlands*, KAPD). Paul Levi became leader of the KPD in 1919, and was accused of centrism, after leading the party away from a strategy of immediate revolution to a more gradualist approach. A large number of Independent Social Democratic Party members joined the KPD, making it a mass party. Levi was expelled from the party in 1921. In the 1920s, its internal factional struggles partly mirrored those going on at the time of the 'literary discussion' in Soviet Russia. By 1923, a new leadership more favourable to Moscow, and headed by Ernst Thälmann, was taking over. It had the reputation as the most influential Communist Party outside of Moscow, sustaining a solid electoral bloc in Weimar Germany as the Nazis rose to power. Like the Communist Party of Poland (*Komunistyczna Partia Polski*), KPD saw some of its leaders swept up in the Moscow purges in the late 1930s and executed. See also **Comintern**; **Communist Party of Poland**; **Levi**; **Liebknecht**; **Luxemburg**; **Radek**.

The **Communist Party of Poland** (*Komunistyczna Partia Polski*, KPP) was founded in December 1918 through the merger of the Social Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL) and the Polish Socialist Party-Lewice (Left) into the Communist Workers' Party of Poland (*Komunistyczna Partia Robotnicza Polski*,

KPRP). By 1919, its support had grown enough to challenge the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). It operated under very difficult conditions, but took part in the founding of the Comintern in March 1919. The party was aligned with Zinoviev, but also defended Trotsky, among others, in the run-up to the 'literary discussion'. Its independent stance ensured that it would eventually become a target for 'Bolshevisation' in the Comintern. This occurred at the Third Congress of the KPRP in March 1925 when factions were banned in the party. It shortened its name to the KPP. Still, the independent-minded behaviour of the KPP persisted. The Nazi seizure of power in Germany broke up the close relationship between the KPP and the KPD, and it began to cast around for all kinds of formerly unacceptable allies in the interests of survival. In the 1930s it was caught in the purges taking place in Moscow, and the leading cadres of the party were accused of being agents of the reactionary Polish regime and executed. See also **Comintern**; **Dzerzhinsky**; **Communist Party of Germany**.

Conferences and Congresses of the RSDRP. See **Russian Social Democracy**.

Conferences and Congresses of the RSDRP(b) and RKP(b). See **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**.

Conciliators (*soglashateli*) was a derogatory term applied to the position of Bolsheviks like V.P. Nogin and A.I. Rykov, who, over Lenin's opposition, had called for reconciliation with the Mensheviks and with the expelled faction of Left Deviationists at a plenum of the Central Committee of the RSDRP in January 1910. The term 'conciliationism' was applied to broader manifestations of perceived errant and overly compromising political behaviour, and particularly to such manifestations in the Soviets in the course of 1917. See also **Left Deviations**; **Opposition**; **Vacillators**.

The **Congress of Soviets** (*S'ezd Sovetov*) was the highest governing body of the RSFSR, and the legislative branch of the USSR until 1936. It was made up of representatives of local Soviets, and was formally the exclusive organ of the working people. In practice it was very deferential to the Bolsheviks. The **Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies** (*Vtoroi Vserossiiskii s'ezd sovetov rabochikh i soldatskikh deputatov*) convened from 25–27 October 1917 in Petrograd in the midst of the October insurrection. The 649 delegates represented 402 Soviets, and were made up of 390 Bolsheviks, 160 SRs, 72 Mensheviks, 14 Unified Internationalists, 6 Menshevik Internationalists, and 7 Ukrainian socialists. Lenin proclaimed the socialist revolution at this Congress. See also **Russian Social Democracy**; **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**.

The **Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies of the Northern Region** (*S'ezd Sovetov Rabochikh i Soldatskikh Deputatov Severnoi oblasti*) took place in Petrograd on 24–26 (11–13) October 1917 on the initiative of the Bolsheviks. A total of 94

delegates from Petrograd, Moscow, Kronstadt, Novgorod, Reval, Helsingfors, Vyborg and other cities attended the congress. 51 were Bolsheviks, 24 were Left SRS, 4 were SR maximalists, one a Menshevik Internationalist, 10 Right SRS, and 4 Menshevik Defensists. On 25 (12) October, it adopted a resolution demanding the transfer of power to the Soviets, calling on the peasants to support the struggle for the transfer of power to the Soviets, and demanding the creation of a Soviet government. A Northern Region Executive Committee of 17 members, including 11 Bolsheviks, was charged with the calling of the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

The **Constituent Assembly** (*Uchreditel'noe sobranie*) met for one session on 5–6 January 1918. The practice of convening representative assemblies to address particular crises in Russia had a long history. It was formally revived by the Constitutional Democrats and other groups during the 1905 Revolution. It was broadly supported by many groups, including Lenin's Bolsheviks, after the February Revolution of 1917, and the Provisional Government itself was conceived as a transitional organ of power until the Assembly could convene. Elections were held on 12 and 26 November. The elections returned 707 deputies (370 SRS, 40 Left SRS, 175 Bolsheviks, 16 Mensheviks, 86 representatives of national minorities, 17 Kadets, 2 Popular Socialists, and 1 unknown). The relatively poor showing of the Bolsheviks convinced Lenin that the Constituent Assembly should not convene, and he justified his position with the argument that the lists of nominees for the elections had been compiled before October when the correlation of forces was very different. Nonetheless, under pressure from his government allies, the Left SRS, in the Sovnarkom, Lenin convened the Assembly in the Tauride Palace (*Tavrisheskii dvorets*), only to have it dispersed by armed force almost immediately. See also **Democratic Conference**; **Kadets**; **Socialist Revolutionary Party**.

The **Constitutional Democratic Party**. See **Kadets**.

Contact Commission (*Kontaktnaia kommissiia*) consisted of Chkheidze, Steklov, Sukhanov, Filippovskii and Skobelev (and later Chernov and Tsereteli). It was set up by the Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies on 7 March 1917 for the purpose of establishing contact with the Provisional Government, of 'influencing' and 'overseeing' its activities. The Bolsheviks criticised it for effectively supporting the 'bourgeois policies' of the Provisional Government and obstructing workers' efforts to transfer all power to the soviets. The 'Contact Commission' existed until May 1917 when representatives of the Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries joined the Provisional Government. See also **Provisional Government**.

Cossacks belonged to centuries-old military communities in Ukraine and Southern Russia that had historically been deployed by successive tsars at particular moments of military need and that had gained certain privileges in return for that military service. In June 1918, the Soviet government levelled the Cossack communities with the rest of the communities in these regions. Cossacks saw action on both sides of the fighting during the civil war, some for the Reds, others for the Whites.

The **Council of Labour and Defence** (*Soviet Truda i Oborony*, STO) was set up in 1920, and succeeded the Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Defence (*Sovet rabochei i krest'ianskoi oborony*) which had been established in 1918. STO was responsible for military economic matters in the new Soviet Russia. See also **NEP**.

Council of People's Commissars. See **Sovnarkom**.

The **Council of the Republic** (*Sovet Respubliki*), also known as the Pre-parliament (*Predparlament*), was appointed by the Democratic Conference in September 1917 to run matters until the Constituent Assembly could be convened. See also **Democratic Conference**; **Constituent Assembly**.

The **Counter-Revolutionary Trotskyist-Zinovievite Terrorist Organisation**. See **Show Trials**.

Wilhelm Carl Josef **Cuno** (1876–1933), director of the Hamburg-Amerika shipping line, was Chancellor of the so-called 'businessmen's government' of Weimar Germany from 1922 to 1923. His political experience was largely in economic and food supply matters prior to and during the First World War. The Cuno government adopted economic policies that triggered hyperinflation in mid-1923, leading to a wave of strikes in August that led to the resignation of Cuno and his cabinet in the same month. In the 'literary discussion' in Russia, the Cuno government was invoked as a cautionary tale about government's unresponsiveness to mass sentiments and about the need for political parties to be active in their responses towards them. See also **German Revolution of 1918–19**; **German Revolution of 1923**.

Heinrich **Cunow** (1862–1936), a theoretician of the SPD in Germany, was editor of *Die Neue Zeit* (*The New Times*) during 1917–23. Before the war, he fought any attempts to revise Marxism in theoretical terms, but began to revise Marxist theory after the war. He was often denounced as a social-imperialist. He was author of the revisionist work *Die Marxsche Geschichts-, Gesellschafts- und Staatstheorie* (two volumes, Berlin, 1920–1). See also **Bernstein**.

G. **Daian** wrote for Bolshevik publications, including *Krasnaia nov'*, in the 1920s. He wrote on the 1905 revolution.

Fedor Il'ich **Dan**, born Gurvich (1871–1947), was a Menshevik leader and close ally of Martov. He was active in the St. Petersburg Union of Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class (*Soiuz bor'by za osvobozhdenie rabocheho klassa*), and was arrested and exiled in 1896. He joined the Social-Democratic movement and attended the Second Congress of the RSDRP in 1903 in London. He supported Martov's argument for a broad, open, mass Social Democratic Party. He returned to Russia in 1912, was again exiled, and finally released in 1915 to serve as a doctor during the First World War. After the February Revolution, he was an influential member of the Executive Committee of the Soviets, and supported Menshevik involvement in the Provisional Government. He opposed the October Revolution, and was arrested by the Bolsheviks in 1921, emigrating a year later. In emigration, he was an editor of the newspaper, *Sotsialisticheskii vestnik* (*Socialist Courier*), first in Paris, then in Berlin, and finally in New York City. After Nazi Germany invaded the USSR, he came out in support of the Soviet regime. His close collaboration with Liber earned them and their followers the derogatory sobriquet in Bolshevik Russia of 'Liberdants' (*Liberdantsy*) and their moderate views on socialist revolution earned them the term 'Liberdanism' (*Liberdanstvo*). See also **Liber**; **Martov**; **Mensheviks**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

Eduard Heinrich Rudolph **David** (1863–1930) was a member of the Social Democratic Party of Germany and colleague of Bernstein, who was heavily criticised by the Bolsheviks, including Lenin, for 'opportunism' in his writings for 'supporting' the German bourgeoisie. David's book *Social Democracy in the World War* (*Die Sozialdemokratie im Weltkrieg*, Berlin, 1915) came in for special criticism from Lenin. David served as Minister of the Interior in the Weimar Republic from June to October 1919. See also **Bernstein**; **German Revolution of 1918–19**.

The **Declaration of the 46** was a secret letter sent by 46 leading Communists of the CC of the CPSU on 15 October 1923. It controversially reiterated similar concerns expressed by Trotsky a week earlier in a letter to the Politburo in which he had complained about the growing bureaucratisation in the party. See also **Opposition**.

Defencism (*oboronchestvo*) referred to political support for a bourgeois government's war. Any support for continuation of the war, whether by the tsarist government or the post-February Provisional Government, exposed any moderate activists, and especially Mensheviks and SRS, to charges of defencism. In contrast to this, Lenin in exile proposed a policy of revolutionary defeatism. See also **Opposition**; **Revolutionary Defeatism**; **Zimmerwald Conference**.

F. Deliusin. I am unable to find information on this individual.

Democratic Centralists. See **Opposition.**

The **Democratic Conference** (*Demokraticeskoe soveshchanie, Vserossiiskoe demokraticeskoe soveshchanie*) convened from 14–22 September 1917 at the Alexandrinsky Theatre in Petrograd. After Kerensky proclaimed Russia a republic on 1 September 1917, the Conference was called to legitimise power. 1,582 delegates participated, with representatives from Soviets, political parties, local zemstvos, trade unions, co-operatives, army groups, and national institutions, including 532 SRs, 172 Mensheviks, 136 Bolsheviks, and 55 trudoviks. It initially passed a resolution in favour of a coalition with the bourgeoisie, and appointed a Pre-parliament (*Predparlament*) or Council of the Republic (*Sovet Respubliki*), composed of 15 per cent of the membership of each group, to run things until the Constituent Assembly could be convened. Both Lenin and Trotsky initially proposed boycotting the Conference, and finally withdrew after issuing a declaration that called for, among other things, the immediate convening of an All-Russian Congress of Soviets, transfer of all power to the Soviets, abolition of private property, and workers' control over production. See also **April Theses; Constituent Assembly.**

Den' (*Day*) was a Petrograd socialist daily published by Menshevik 'defencists' from May 1917. From June 1917, it was edited by leading moderate socialists such as A. Potresov and P. Maslov, among others. It was closed down by the Military Revolutionary Committee and appeared in various guises until it was closed down once and for all in May 1918. See also **Defencism; Opposition; Revolutionary Defeatism; Zimmerwald Conference.**

Anton Ivanovich **Denikin** (1872–1947) was a career officer in the tsarist army. He was arrested in 1917 for his support of the Kornilov mutiny, but escaped to the Don region in southern Russia where he became a prominent general in the White forces fighting against the Bolsheviks during the Civil War. Denikin's forces managed to occupy the North Caucasus and advanced towards Moscow, but were routed by the Bolsheviks in October 1919. From 1926, he spent most of the rest of his life in exile in France, where he wrote a long history of the Civil War. After the Second World War, he spent two years in the United States until his death in Michigan in 1947. See also **Iudenich; Kaledin; Kolchak; Kornilov Affair; Mamontov; Wrangel'.**

Die Gesellschaft. *Internationale Revue für Sozialismus und Politik* (*Society. International Review of Socialism and Politics*) was a theoretical journal edited by the Marxist economic theorist and later SPD Finance Minister Rudolf Hilferding and published in

Berlin. It featured many of the leading Social Democrats of the time, including Karl Kautsky. It appeared from 1924 to 1933.

Dual power (*dvoevlastie*) denoted the split in state authority after the February Revolution of 1917 between the Provisional Government and the Soviets. These two institutions were established independently of one another. The Provisional Committee of the Duma wanted, for the most part, reform rather than revolution, and it set up a Provisional Government to lead the new state until the necessary elections to the Constituent Assembly. The Provisional Government was highly conservative in composition. The Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, on the other hand, grew out of revolutionary organisations like the strike committees, and offered conditional support to the Provisional Government. Dual power describes this condition of governmental paralysis, the Provisional Government deferring full legitimisation of power until a later date, while having its legitimacy challenged by the Soviets, which claimed its legitimacy from the workers and soldiers. See also **Constituent Assembly**; **Provisional Government**.

Fedor **Dubasov** (1845–1912) was a Russian admiral who served in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–8. In 1905, he suppressed peasant unrest in the Ukrainian provinces, and served as Moscow's governor-general from November 1905 to July 1906, crushing the December uprising there. The PSR made two attempts on his life in 1906, wounding him on 23 April 1906. During the Reaction, he served in the State Defense Council. See also **Socialist Revolutionary Party**.

Iosif Fedorovich **Dubrovinskii**, born Innokentii (1877–1913), was active in populist circles until he became a Marxist and joined the Kaluga Social-Democratic organisation in 1896. He spent several years in exile for his political activism through the turn of the century. He joined the Bolsheviks after the split at the Second Congress of the RSDRP in 1903. Dubrovinskii took part in the 1905 Revolution in Moscow and St. Petersburg. During the Reaction, he worked illegally in St. Petersburg trying to sustain the suppressed party organisations. After arrest and exile, he escaped to Paris, where he was on the editorial board for the newspaper *Proletarii* (*Proletarian*). In 1910, he was advocating reconciliation with the Mensheviks, a decision for which Lenin criticised him. He returned to Russia in 1910. He was quickly arrested and exile to Siberia, where, gravely ill with tuberculosis, he committed suicide. See also **Populism**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

The Imperial State **Duma** was a (limited) lower house of parliament granted by Nicholas II as a political concession after the 1905 Revolution. Sergei Witte, eventually Imperial Russia's first Prime Minister, issued a manifesto convening the Duma on 6

August 1905. The tsar promised to invest significant legislative powers in the State Duma, although he drew back from this promise, instead issuing the Fundamental Laws in mid-1906 which kept the Duma in a strictly subservient position vis-à-vis the autocracy. The Duma was elected four times, in 1906, twice in 1907, and again in 1912. It was instrumental in choosing the Provisional Government after the tsar's abdication in the wake of the February Revolution of 1917. See also **Provisional Government**.

Mikhail Grigor'evich **Dugachev** was a member of the RSDRP(b) from March 1917, and a member of the CC of the Komsomol from April 1918 to October 1920. He was engaged in party and trade union work throughout the 1920s and 1930s. He was called up to the Red Army in June 1941, falling at the front. See also **Komsomol**.

Felix Edmundovich **Dzerzhinsky** (1877–1926) was a prominent Polish-born member of the Polish and Russian revolutionary movements. He helped set up the Social Democratic Party of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania. He experienced various periods of arrest and exile until the February Revolution in 1917. He joined the CC of the RSDRP(b) in August, participating actively in the build-up to the October Revolution. Lenin nominated him in December 1917 as the head of the Cheka, and he held that post until his death. For various periods in the first half of the 1920s, he was also People's Commissar of the Interior (*Narodnyi komissar vnutrennykh del*), People's Commissar of Transport (*Narodnyi komissar putei soobshcheniia*), and People's Commissar of the Higher Council of the National Economy (*Vysshiĭ Sovet Narodnogo Khoziaistvo*, VSNKh) at the same time. After his death in 1926 he was buried with honours in the Kremlin Wall. See **Cheka**; **Russian Social Democracy**; **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**.

Max Forrester **Eastman** (1883–1969) was an American writer and political activist from New York who engaged in liberal and socialist causes. In 1922, he travelled to Soviet Russia, where he spent two years, even attending the party congress in 1924. He met his future wife there, Elena Krylenko, sister of Nikolai Krylenko who organised the show trials in the 1930s. In Russia, Eastman began a friendship with Trotsky which would last until the latter's death. He translated several of Trotsky's works into English. On his return to the United States in 1927, Eastman wrote articles criticising the treatment of artists and political activists in Soviet Russia. From the 1940s onwards, he became increasingly critical of socialism and Marxism and embraced free-market principles. He died in Bridgetown, Barbados in 1969. See also **Reed**; **Show Trials**; **Shachtman**; **Wells**.

ECCI. See **Comintern**.

Economism (*ekonomizm*) refers to the strain of late nineteenth-century Marxist thinking that counselled against revolution in Russia because of the still early stage of capitalist development and the political immaturity of the proletariat in that country. In this view, expounded by E. Kuskova, among others, and quite influential on early Social Democrats, the working classes should focus on improving their economic conditions, and join politically with liberals to that end. Revolutionary Marxists, who were trying to push the proletariat to take a leading role in revolutionary activity, considered the term 'economism' as a term of abuse. See also **Bernstein**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

The **Emancipation of Labour Group** (*Gruppa Osvobozhdeniia Truda*) was the first Russian Marxist organisation. It was formed in 1883 by Russian exiles in Switzerland, including Plekhanov, Axelrod, Zasulich, Deutsch, and Ignatov, after their renunciation of Populism (*Narodnichestvo*). Guided by its major theoretician and writer, Plekhanov, the group set about spreading socialist ideas throughout Russia and working out how to set up a socialist party for the workers. The group was a major stage in the formation of the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party, Plekhanov writing early drafts of its programme in 1883 and 1885. The group was actively opposed to Economism. It was most active from 1901 to 1903, after merging with Lenin's *Spark* (*Iskra*) group, although this was also a period of growing divergence of ideas between Lenin and Plekhanov. After Russian Social Democracy split into the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks at the Second Congress of the RSDRP, the Emancipation of Labour group disbanded in August 1903. See also *Iskra*; **Populism**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

Empiriocriticism. See **Left Deviations**.

Konstantin Stepanovich **Eremeev** (1874–1931) was a revolutionary activist who, amid periods of tsarist persecution for his political activities, joined the editorial boards of the prominent Bolshevik newspapers, *Zvezda* in 1910 and *Pravda* in 1912. He was on the Bureau of the CC of the RSDRP(b) after the February Revolution, and was a member of the MRC in Petrograd during the October insurrection. In the 1920s, he was a publicist, involved in organising the State Publishing House (Gosizdat), and the first editor of the satirical magazine *Krokodil* (*Crocodile*) from 1922 to 1928. He wrote works on the October Revolution and the Civil War and published reminiscences of his encounters with Lenin. See also *Pravda*; *Zvezda*.

'**Face to the Village**' (*litsom k derevne*) was the slogan for the Communist Party's most conciliatory policies toward the peasantry during the New Economic Policy in the 1920s. It involved efforts to build up a network of rural party connections among the peasants, whom many Communists regarded as a drag on the future development of the revolution. The Komsomol played a major role in bringing the Communist utopian message to the peasantry. See also **NEP**; **Populism**.

Factory and plant committees (*fabzavkomy*) were elected organs that emerged in enterprises and transport organisations after the February Revolution of 1917. They were elected at general meetings of workers and employees of enterprises and factories, and were independent of their trade union affiliations. They were intended to act as supervisory organs over management. See also **Duma**; **Soviets**.

Mikhail Mikhailovich **Fedorov** (1859–1949) was a Russian state and public actor, born of a noble family. He worked on economic and financial matters, most prominently in the tsarist Department of Trade and Industry (*Ministerstvo trgovli i promyshlennosti*) from 1903. He was prominent in the Red Cross, and was generally involved in liberal concerns as head of the co-operative movement. He continued such causes during the First World War, and joined up with the White Movement during the Civil War in the Don region. He emigrated to Paris in 1920, where he was active in émigré affairs, and took part in the Foreign Congress (*Zarubezhnyi s'ezd*) of émigrés in Paris in 1926. He spent the rest of his life providing services for the Russian youth abroad, notably in the realm of higher education through his 'Fedorov Committee'. He is buried in the famous Russian émigré cemetery at Ste-Geneviève-des-Bois outside Paris. See also Denikin.

The **Finland Station** (*Finliandskii vokzal*), dating from 1870, is the railway station in St. Petersburg where Lenin famously arrived on 3 April 1917 on the train that brought him, along with other revolutionary radicals, from foreign exile through Germany. The moment was marked in 1926 by the erection of a statue of Lenin by S.A. Evseev in the station square. Lenin's return was transformed into a revolutionary icon in Sergei Eisenstein's film *October* (*Oktiabr'*) in 1927. See also **Aurora**; **Finland Station**; **Peter and Paul Fortress**; **Sealed Train**; **Sarai and Shalash**; **Smolnyi**, **Winter Palace**; **Zaria Svobody**.

The **Finnish Revolution** refers to the civil war that lasted from January to May 1918, after Finland's declaration of independence from Russia on 6 December 1917. Russia's chaos led to the collapse of the Finnish state, and the spoils of power were fought over by the Social Democrat 'Reds' and the non-socialist, conservative 'Whites'. After a series of heated and bloody battles, the Whites, aided by the German army in the south, won the war. See also **German Revolution of 1918–19**; **German Revolution of 1923**; **Hungarian Revolution**; **September Antifascist Uprising**.

Ruth **Fischer**, born Elfriede Eisler (1895–1961), was a co-founder of the Austrian Communist Party in November 1918. In 1919, she moved to Berlin where she led the Leftists, and then joined the Communist Party of Germany. She was a German delegate to the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in November 1922, and in 1923 she joined the CC of the KPD. In 1924 she led the German delegation to the Fifth Congress of the Comintern.

She was a Reichstag deputy from 1924 to 1928. In September 1925, she was criticised in an open letter by the Comintern and expelled from the KPD in August 1926. After the Nazis came to power, she moved to Paris. In 1935, she spent a year on the secretariat of the Trotskyist Communist League. The wartime and postwar years saw a peripatetic exile until her death in Paris in 1961. See also **Comintern; Communist Party of Germany; Communist Party of Poland**.

Fourth International. See **Trotsky**.

Friesland (Frisliand), the nickname for Ernst Reuter (1889–1953), was at one time a prominent German communist who vocally declared himself in favour of Lenin's new course at the Third Congress of the Comintern in June 1921. His efforts as General Secretary of the KPD to make the KPD as politically and materially independent of the Comintern as possible brought him into conflict with the latter and with his own party, as he began to criticise the internal state of his party. In January 1922, he was expelled from the KPD. He joined the Independent Socialists (USPD), editing the newspaper *Freiheit* (*Freedom*). After the USPD merged with the SPD in October 1922, he joined the SPD. Friesland worked in the Berlin city administration, was elected mayor of Magdeburg in 1931. He was arrested at various times after the NSDAP came to power in 1933, ending up in Lichtenburg concentration camp. International pressure brought his release in September 1934, and he emigrated to Great Britain in January 1935. His peripatetics eventually took him to Turkey, returning to Germany only in 1946 with Allied permission. He served as mayor of West Berlin from 1946–53. See also **Comintern; Communist Party of Germany**.

Louis-Olivier **Frossard** (1889–1946) was General Secretary of the French Communist Party (PCF) from 1920 to 1922, and a delegate to the IKKI. His early experiences with French parliamentary socialism were often invoked in criticisms of his 'centrist' tendencies in the PCF. During the First World War, he was in a bloc with Longuet, although he moved to the left after the war and broke with the Longuetists. After the 1919 split in the French Socialist Party (PSF), he joined the PCF. He was frequently accused of holding centrist views while in the party, and after the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in 1922 moved the PCF sharply to the left, Frossard left the party and moved back to the Second International. See also **Comintern; Second International**.

Petr Abramovich **Garvi**, born Bronshtein, pseud. Chatskii (1861–1944), joined the RSDRP in 1900 and conducted Social-Democratic activity all over the Russian Empire. He was arrested in 1902, but escaped from exile and fled abroad. He was close to Axelrod and Martov, among other prominent Social Democrats. He was a life-long critic of Bolshevism from the party split in 1903. In the 1905 revolution, he was a founder

of the Russian trade-union movement. He was criticised as a liquidationist from 1907, and took part in the Vienna Conference in 1912 that contrasted sharply with Lenin's Prague Conference over the future of the RSDRP. He was arrested repeatedly by the tsarist regime. He returned from exile in 1917 and worked prominently in Menshevik activities throughout that year. After October, he was on the right wing of Menshevism and highly critical of the Bolsheviks, although he acknowledged the need for a 'homogenous socialist government' that would have included the Bolsheviks. He was equally critical of the leftist orientation, as he saw it, of many Menshevik leaders. He was arrested by the Soviet regime in 1922 and exiled to Siberia, but was subsequently allowed to emigrate. Like others in the Menshevik emigration, he remained a fierce opponent of the Soviet regime. See also **Mensheviks; Russian Social Democracy**.

L. **Geller** was one of a group of special assistants to Trotsky who helped organise and edit Trotsky's writings in the early 1920s. See also **Glazman; Kryzhanovskii; Lentsner; Rovenskaia; Rumer**.

The '**Georgian Affair**' of 1922 referred to a conflict among local and central Georgian Bolshevik leaders after the state's short-lived Menshevik government had been toppled by the Soviet government. It was a case study for the possibilities and limits of the new Soviet nationality policy during the NEP era. In the Georgian case, the conflict hinged on Georgia's degree of autonomy both from Moscow and from the Transcaucasian SFSR, an amalgamation of Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaidzhan envisaged by Moscow. Lenin and Stalin clashed over this issue, and the hard line of Stalin and Ordzhonikidze eventually won out, resulting in a hard-line Communist government in Georgia. See also **Mensheviks**.

The failed **German Revolution of 1918–19** refers to the political conflict that helped transform Germany at the end of the war into a republic. Demoralised by German defeats and inspired by Russia's Bolsheviks, German Communists were nonetheless unable to replicate Bolshevik success in their own country. The leaders of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) were steadfastly anti-Bolshevik. Afraid of civil war in Germany, the SPD sought a more centrist road out of Germany's postwar chaos. The crushing of the Spartacist uprising in January 1919 is generally taken to mark the end of the German Revolution. Both Lenin and Trotsky located the blame for the defeat of this revolution firmly in the lack of a strong party capable of guiding the revolution. See also **Finnish Revolution; German Revolution of 1923; Hungarian Revolution; Communist Party of Germany; September Antifascist Uprising**.

The failed **German Revolution of 1923** is often referred to in the literature as the 'German October'. A potential revolutionary situation arose in Germany from the Weimar

government's reluctance or inability to meet the Allied reparation demands being levied on the defeated German nation. When the Reparations Commission determined that Germany had defaulted on its payments, Belgian and French troops occupied the Ruhr industrial region in January 1923. Hyperinflation and rising unemployment marked 1923 in Germany, and spreading strikes and popular dissatisfaction rendered the government of Wilhelm Cuno impotent. Extremists on both left and right saw the disintegration of the Weimar Republic as inevitable. Soviet Russia was most interested in the leftist regions of Thuringia and Saxony, seeing in these socialist regions most scope for communist influence by the KPD. Germany appeared on the cusp of a Bolshevik-style revolution. At the same time, the far right in Germany was organising, culminating in the failed 'Beer Hall Putsch' in November 1923 involving Hitler in Munich. The question of how much the Bolshevik Party was directly or indirectly involved in helping foment revolution in Germany was part of the 'literary discussion' of 1924 in Russia. Brandler, leader of the KPD, was pressured by the Bolsheviks to press forward with revolution, although he was more sanguine about its prospects of success. Ultimately, he deemed the deteriorating emergency situation in Germany to be deeply un conducive to revolution, and it was postponed, never to take place. Only Hamburg saw any kind of uprising by the KPD on 23 October 1923, and that was quickly crushed. See also **Brandler**; **Cuno**; **Finnish Revolution**; **German Revolution of 1918–19**; **Hungarian Revolution**; **September Antifascist Uprising**.

Curt Geyer (1891–1967) was a German Social-Democratic activist, who was on the editorial board of the newspaper *Vorwärts* (*Forward*) in 1914. He joined the Independent Socialist Party of Germany (USPD) in 1917, and as leader of its left wing he later advocated joining the Comintern. He was expelled in August 1921, but did not join the left opposition in the SPD. He emigrated to Britain after the Nazis came to power in 1933. While there he was on the SPD Executive in exile. See also **Comintern**.

M.S. **Glazman** was one of Trotsky's secretaries. He joined the Bolshevik Party during the Civil War, serving as Trotsky's secretary on his military train. He helped edit Trotsky's collected works, supported Trotsky in the intraparty fights of 1923, and was expelled from the Communist Party in 1924 for his close ties to Trotsky. Glazman committed suicide in early September 1924. Trotsky blamed Glazman's suicide on the party's political hounding of him. See also **Geller**; **Kryzhanovskii**; **Lentsner**; **Rovenskaia**; **Rumer**.

God-constructivists. See **Left Deviations**.

God-seekers. See **Left Deviations**.

I.P. **Goldenberg** (1873–1922) became a Bolshevik after the 1903 split at the Second Congress of the RSDRP. He edited Bolshevik publications during the 1905 Revolution, but joined the ‘defencists’ during the First World War. He was a member of the *Novaia zhizn’* (*New Life*) group from 1917–19. He returned to the RKP(b) in 1920. See also **Defencism**; *Novaia zhizn’*.

Golos. See *Nashe slovo*.

Filipp Isaevich **Goloshchekin** (1876–1941) was engaged in revolutionary activity in the Urals and Siberia, after joining the Bolshevik faction of the RSDRP in 1903. He participated in the 1905 revolution, and was a member of the Petersburg Committee of the RSDRP from 1906. During the Reaction, he was arrested and escaped to exile, attending Lenin’s Prague Conference in 1912. He was again arrested and exiled, returning to legal activity only after the February Revolution. He was a prominent revolutionary organiser in the Urals from May 1917. He returned to Petrograd to join the Military Revolutionary Committee and took part in the insurrection in October. He returned to Ekaterinburg in November, destroying there the Unified Committee of Popular Power (*Ob’edinennyi Komitet Narodnoi Vlasti*) made up of representatives of various socialist parties. He took part in the execution of the tsarist family in Ekaterinburg. From 1922–5, he chaired the Samara provincial Soviet, and from then until 1933 he was First Secretary of the CC of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan. He took an active part in forced collectivisation while there. He was arrested in October 1939, accused of participation in an anti-Soviet organisation and in pederasty. He was sentenced to prison and eventually shot in 1941. He was rehabilitated in 1961. See also **Russian Social Democracy**; **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**; **Safarov**.

Maxim **Gorky**, born Aleksei Maksimivich Peshkov (1868–1936), was a famous Russian novelist and playwright whose works explored and championed the lives of the poorest in tsarist society. A politically engaged Social Democrat, he helped raise funds for the Bolshevik faction of the party in its early days until his arrest in 1905. On his release, his peripatetic life in exile took him to Europe and the United States, returning to Russia in 1917. He was initially critical of the Bolsheviks after October, and spent much of the 1920s in Europe. On his return to Russia in 1920, he became a strong supporter of the policies of forced collectivisation and rapid industrialisation, and was much celebrated in the USSR as a founder of Socialist Realism. Gorky died on 18 June 1936 in suspicious circumstances. He was cremated and his ashes interred in the Kremlin Wall. See also *Novaia zhizn’*.

Gosplan. See **State Planning Commission**.

Salomon **Grumbach** (1884–1952) was a political publicist with strong ties to the Socialist Party of Germany (SPD) and was a member of the French Section of the Workers' International (*Section française de l'Internationale*, SFIO). An Alsacien, he worked to improve Franco-German relations. At the time of the 'literary discussion', he was prominent in the international socialist movement, working for reconciliation between France and Germany in the wake of Versailles. See also **Second International**.

Aleksandr Ivanovich **Guchkov** (1862–1936) was a conservative Russian politician who founded and led the Octobrist Party ('Union of October 17', *Soiuz 17 Oktiabria*). He supported the tsarist government in its struggle against revolutionary groups and was elected president of the Third State Duma in 1910, resigning a year later. During the First World War, he became disillusioned with court politics and the tsar's handling of the war, and became head of the Russian Red Cross and later president of the War Industries Committee. Guchkov was the Minister of War and Navy (*Voennyi i morskoi ministr*) in the Provisional Government, but resigned in May 1917. He left Russia after the October Revolution, and was active in the émigré movement in Paris until his death. See also **Duma**; **Provisional Government**.

Rudolf **Hilferding** (1877–1941) was an economist and prominent Austrian Marxist. He was active first in Austrian Social Democracy, but joined German Social Democracy in 1906. A Kautskian centrist during the war, he joined the Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany (USPD) in 1918. After the 1918 November Revolution in Germany, he edited the USPD's newspaper *Die Freiheit* (*Freedom*). He opposed a merger with the Communist Party of Germany (KPD) in 1922, instead supporting a merger with the Social Democratic Party (SPD). He served as Minister of Finance in 1923 in the Weimar Republic. He continued his work for the SPD in various capacities until he fled Germany after Hitler came to power. Living the life of an exile in Europe, he was arrested by the Vichy police in France and handed over to the Gestapo in February 1941. He died under unknown circumstances, his death being announced in late 1941. In the 'literary discussion', Hilferdingism is used as a shorthand dismissal for adherence to moderate Social Democracy instead of full-blooded commitment to the communist path. See also **Bernstein**; *Die Gesellschaft*; **Kautsky**.

Morris **Hillquit**, born Moses Hilkowitz (1869–1933), helped found the Socialist Labor Party of America (SLPA). Born in Riga, Russia, he emigrated to America with his family in 1886. He joined the SLPA a year after his arrival in New York City. In 1901, the SLPA merged with the Social Democratic Party (SDP) based in Chicago. He was a life-long member of the SPA, representing it in international socialist gatherings. He was an opponent of the syndicalist left wing of the party. He was an internationalist and anti-militarist during the First World War. During the 1920s, he wrote a series of

academic pieces on the history of socialism in the USA, as well as studies of socialist theory and Leninist applications of Marxism. See **Eastman; Reed; Shachtman**.

John A. Hobson (1858–1940) was an English economist and critic of imperialism who came into contact with Social Democracy while in London in the late nineteenth century. He was a social liberal who wrote several prominent works on poverty and the problems of capitalism. His major work, *Imperialism*, appeared in 1902. See also **Reed; Wells**.

Karl Zeth Höglund (1884–1956) was a member of the Swedish Social Democratic Party (SDPs) from 1904, and was active in the socialist youth movement and in editorial matters. He was a pacifist and internationalist during the First World War, and a Swedish Member of Parliament in 1915. In September, he represented the leftist Swedish SDs at the Zimmerwald conference. He founded the Left Social Democratic Party in 1917. He supported the Bolshevik Revolution and visited Petrograd in 1918, eventually transforming his LSDP into the Swedish Communist Party (SCP) in 1921. He attended the Third Congress of the Comintern in 1921, and was elected to its IKKI in late 1922. On behalf of the Scandinavian nations, he opposed the Comintern's policy of Bolshevising foreign Communist Parties. Just prior to the 'literary discussion', Höglund attended the Fifth Congress of the Comintern in June and July 1924. Zinoviev and Bukharin criticised him over his stance on Bolshevisation, and he defied Comintern directives. The IKKI issued an open letter to the SCP censuring the 'renegade Höglund'. Later in 1924, he founded an independent socialist movement, only returning to the Swedish SDP in 1926. He was featured in the 'literary discussion' as a 'renegade from Communism'. See also **Comintern; Left Deviations; Zimmerwald Conference**.

The '**homogeneous socialist government**' (*odnorodnoe sotsialisticheskoe pravitel'stvo*) was a socialist response to disappointment with the Provisional Government after the Kornilov mutiny. Left SRS, *mezhraiontsy*, Menshevik-Internationalists, although a minority in the Soviets at that time, and some Bolsheviks believed that a homogeneous socialist government might win the support of the masses. The idea won little support among those in the majority in the Soviets at the time, such as the Right SDs (Mensheviks) and Right SRS. See also **Vikzhel**.

Břetislav Hula (1894–1937) was a Czech Communist who joined the Bolsheviks after the October Revolution. He was instrumental in organising the Czechoslovak section of the RKP(b) in May 1918. On his return to Czechoslovakia, he tried to persuade the Social Democratic Party to join the Comintern. He edited the Communist newspaper *Svoboda* (*Freedom*) in Kladno. He was a member of the IKKI. He was expelled from the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (CPC) in 1925, after being caught up in a purge of 'rightist opportunists'. See also **Comintern**.

The **Hungarian Revolution** produced the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic between March and August 1919. Béla Kun, one of the founders of the Hungarian Communist Party (*Kommunisták Magyarországi Pártja*) in 1918, led the Soviet Republic, and instituted a full Communist programme. See also **Finnish Revolution**; **German Revolution of 1918–19**; **German Revolution of 1923**; **September Antifascist Uprising**.

Jean Joseph Camille **Huysmans** (1871–1968) was a Belgian politician who was secretary of the Second International from 1905–22. He was an activist for Flemish rights, and opposed the First World War. After the Second World War, he was Prime Minister of Belgium from 1946–7, leading a government of socialists, liberals, and communists. See also **Second International**.

Emel'ian Mikhailovich **Iaroslavskii**, born Minei Izrailevich Gubel'man (1878–1943), joined the revolutionary movement at the age of twenty and worked in socialist organisations in Chita, St. Petersburg, and Odessa. From 1908–17, he was in prison in Siberia for his revolutionary activities in and after the 1905 Revolution. He took part in the October insurrection in Moscow in 1917. He edited a variety of revolutionary newspapers. For a while in 1918, he was a Left Communist, but soon reconciled with the Bolsheviks. In the early 1920s, he was active in the Siberian bureau of the party. He was deeply involved in early efforts to write the history of the party and the revolution, and was a member of the CCC from 1923 to 1930. He was also a candidate member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. He was an active supporter of Stalin against the 'Opposition', especially in the 1930s. He became a member of the CC of the ВКР(б) in 1939. He was best known for his role as the semi-official historian of the party after the 'literary discussion' had ended, and was responsible for increasingly 'orthodox' versions of party history, notably participating in the creation of the *Short Course* party history. He died in 1943, and his cremated remains were placed in an urn in the Kremlin Wall. See also **Comintern**; **Istpart**; **Left Communist**; **Opposition**.

ІККІ. See **Comintern**.

Dmitrii Ivanovich **Ilovaiskii** (1832–1920) was a Russian historian and publicist involved in establishing a canon of Russian tsarist history as propagated through his school textbooks. His work focussed on the lives of the tsars and took little interest in social-economic factors or concerns of the people. He was used in the 'literary discussion' as an example of a conservative, monarchist historian solely interested in 'great people' history and lacking any Marxist credentials. See also **Istpart**; **Institute of Lenin**.

The **Institute of Lenin** (*Institut Lenina*) in Moscow was set up by a resolution of the Moscow Committee of the ВКР(б) in 1923, and was quickly raised to the level of

department (*otdel*) of the CC RKP(b). It was charged with the publication and study of Lenin's oeuvre, and was heavily involved in helping to create the cult of Lenin after his death in January 1924. In 1928, it was merged with Istpart. See also **Istpart**.

Intelligentsia (*intelligentsiia*) refers to successive generations of intellectuals in Russia in the nineteenth century who were known for their sharp critique of the social and political realities of life under the tsars. Parts of this intelligentsia, isolated and disillusioned, became enamoured with populism, and others divided into Slavophiles and Westernisers. In the context of the 'literary discussion', intelligentsia is generally a derogatory term referring to elites who talk endlessly about current problems but are incapable of taking the necessary concrete action, as perceived by the Bolsheviks. See also *Kruzhkovshchina*; **Populism**.

Interdistrict Organisation of the RSDRP. See *Mezhraiontsy*.

Iskra (*The Spark*) was one of the most famous Marxist newspapers, which appeared from 1900 to 1905. It was published in Germany, London, and after 1903 in Geneva. The newspaper was circulated secretly inside tsarist Russia. Its first editorial board was made up of Plekhanov, Axelrod, and Zasulich, and joined by three younger revolutionaries, Lenin, Martov, and Potresov. It was essentially the ideological and organisational centre of the Russian Social Democratic Party and its official organ. At the 1903 party congress at which the party split, the editorial board also split, and the board was reduced to Plekhanov, Lenin, and, at Lenin's suggestion, Martov. When Martov pulled away from the board, it was left in the hands of Lenin and Plekhanov. Lenin eventually withdrew from the board when Plekhanov tried to return the old board members to their positions. The terms 'Iskraite' and 'anti-Iskraite' were used in the 'literary discussion' to denote an early ability or inability on the part of individual Marxists to understand 'correctly' the stakes of a given political situation. The 'inability' to do so, i.e. if one was labelled an 'anti-Iskraite', was often invoked as a sign of current political failings. See also **Russian Social Democracy**.

Istpart (*Komissiiia po istorii Oktiabr'skoi revoliutsii i RKP(b)*) (Commission on the History of the October Revolution and the RKP(b)) was founded in September 1920 by Sovnarkom, and charged with gathering, studying, and publishing materials on the history of the October Revolution and the Bolshevik Party. It very quickly came under the direct purview of the CC of the RKP(b). From 1921, Istpart began publishing its own central journal *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia* (*Proletarian Revolution*), which appeared in Moscow from 1921 to 1941. Istpart had a network of bureaus all across the country, many of them publishing their own local journals, perhaps the most notable being *Krasnaia letopis'* (*Red Chronicle*), which was put out by the Leningrad Istpart from

1922–34 and from 1936–7. Trotsky's charges in the 'literary discussion' that the party had failed to write an adequate history of the revolution hit hard at Istpart, and many of the contributors to the 'literary discussion' had collaborated in the organisation. In 1928, it was merged with the Institute of Lenin (*Institut Lenina*), and its network of local bureaus was curtailed. It effectively ceased functioning by the early 1930s. See also **Institute of Lenin; Kanatchikov; Nevskii; Ol'minskii**.

Nikolai Nikolaevich **Iudenich** (1862–1933) was a White commander in the Civil War who had emerged from the Russo-Japanese War an infantry general and served as chief-of-staff of the tsarist army in 1913. He was in charge of all Russian forces in the Caucasus at various times during the First World War. After the October Revolution, he commanded the North-Western Army in the Baltic area, one of the smaller 'White' armies which fought against the Bolsheviks. In October 1919, he penetrated Soviet territory and led an abortive offensive against Petrograd as part of a grand strategy in support of a campaign against Moscow by another White general, Denikin. After his defeat, Iudenich was arrested in January 1920 as he tried to flee to Western Europe. Diplomatic pressure from Britain and France secured his release, and he retreated to Estonia. He died in exile in France. See also **Denikin; Kaledin; Kolchak; Mamontov; Wrangel'**.

St. **Ivanovich**, born Semen Portugeis (1880–1944), has been called the first Sovietologist of the emigration. He was a pupil of A.N. Potresov, a member of the right wing of Menshevism, and an ardent opponent of Bolshevism. A defencist during the First World War, he went into emigration in 1921 and began publishing the monthly newspaper on socialist thought, *Zaria (Dawn)*, until it folded in 1925. He wrote many books on the activities of the Communist Party in Soviet Russia. See also **Defencism; Mensheviks**.

Izvestiia (*The News*) began life as the official organ of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers' Deputies in March 1917 in Petrograd, and became the official state newspaper in Soviet Russia after October. See also **Pravda**.

Jacobins were the radical activists of the French Revolution who ultimately ushered in the Reign of Terror that eventually consumed them. In Russian revolutionary lore, the term was a derogatory term when used by the Mensheviks, conveying unfettered revolutionary excesses, and positive when used by the Bolsheviks, conveying single-minded revolutionary purity. See also **Blanquism**.

The **July Days** in 1917 describes the popular demonstrations in Petrograd by soldiers, sailors, and workers marching under the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets'. Unable to meet the demands of these groups, and in the wake of an unsuccessful offensive

at the front, the Provisional Government was in crisis, and its ministers resigned in mid-July. The Bolsheviks were initially uncertain whether to join the uprising, and the Mensheviks and SRs counselled the demonstrators to desist. Several hundred people were killed or wounded in clashes with government troops. Prime Minister Lvov resigned over the crisis, and his place taken by Kerensky on 8 July. The period of 'dual power' was over. The Provisional Government accused the Bolsheviks of being in the pay of Germany and inciting the masses to riot, and Lenin fled to Finland. Trotsky and other Bolsheviks were arrested on 22 July. Bolshevik influence temporarily declined after this crisis. See also **Dual Power**; **Kerensky**; **Provisional Government**; **Sarai** and **Shalash**.

Junker. See **Cadet**.

Khristo Stefanov **Kabakchiev** (1878–1940) joined the Bulgarian Social Democratic Workers' Party in 1897. After being educated in medical and law faculties in France, Switzerland, and Bulgaria, he joined the Central Committee of the BSDRP(ns) in 1905, and a member of the Bulgarian Communist Party (BKP) in 1919. He was a regular representative at the congresses of the Second International in 1907, 1910, and 1912, and at the Comintern congresses in 1920, 1921, 1922, and 1928. He was the political secretary of the BKP from 1923, and was considered one of its best theoreticians. He authored the party programme when it took the name Communist in 1919. He took part in the anti-fascist insurrection in Bulgaria in September 1923, was arrested, and was in prison till February 1926. In 1926, he emigrated to Vienna, and in May 1927 to the USSR where he continued his Comintern work. From 1928, he was a member of the VKP(b). He died in Moscow after a severe illness. See also **Blagoev**; **Bulgarian Communist Party**; **Comintern**; **Kolarov**; **Second International**.

The **Kadets** or Constitutional Democratic Party (*Kadety*, *Konstitutsionnaia Demokraticheskaiia Partiiia*) was a liberal political party founded in Moscow in October 1905 when Nicholas II signed the October Manifesto granting basic civil liberties. They were to the left of the Octobrists. The party wanted a constitutional monarchy, a moderate programme of land redistribution and compensation for dispossessed landowners, and an 8-hour workday for workers. The party was led by the historian Pavel Miliukov, numbered prominent liberals like Vladimir Nabokov (father of the famous author), Nikolai Nekrasov, and Petr Struve, in its ranks, and had some 70,000 members at its height. The Kadets were especially vigorous in the first State Duma in 1906, but found themselves placed in increasingly difficult positions as the autocracy tried to hamstring its new institution. Some Kadets even argued that the Duma experience had been a failure. During the First World War, the Kadets supported the tsarist government, and devoted their energies to the Industrial War Committee and relief efforts like the All-

Russian Union of Zemstvos and the All-Russian Union of Towns. After the February Revolution, Miliukov sought to save the monarchy, but eventually supported a republic. The Kadet Party had a majority in the first Provisional Government, in which Miliukov became Foreign Minister. Kadet influence declined though, and by the time of the last Provisional Government, it controlled only two ministerial portfolios. After the October Revolution, the Kadet press was quickly suppressed, and the Kadets took their fight to the civil war battles, and then into the emigration, where the movement soon split into competing factions. See also **Duma**; **Miliukov**; **Provisional Government**.

Aleksei Maksimovich **Kaledin** (1861–1918) served in the Russian army as an officer from 1879 to 1917, rising to the rank of general. He commanded the 8th Army offensive at Lutsk during the First World War. He disagreed with Provisional Government policies in May 1917 and returned to his native Don region, where he was elected ataman of the Don Cossack troops. He headed the anti-Bolshevik campaign there, seizing Rostov-on-Don, but after his campaign failed, he shot himself on 29 January 1918. See also **Denikin**; **Iudenich**; **Kolchak**; **Mamontov**; **Wrangel**.

Mikhail **Kalinin** (1875–1946) joined the RSDRP when it was founded in 1898. He took part in the 1905 Revolution as a member of the staff of the Central Union of Metalworkers. He was a delegate to the Bolshevik Prague Conference in 1912. He was arrested for political activities in 1916 and released during the February Revolution of 1917. For much of that year he found himself in opposition to Lenin in his reluctance to support an immediate overthrow of Kerensky's Provisional Government. He served as President of the Central Executive Committee of the Congress of Soviets of the RSFSR (the Soviet head of state) from 1919 to 1938. He became a full member of the Politburo in 1926. See also **Russian Social Democracy**.

Lev Borisovich **Kamenev**, born Rozenfel'd (1883–1936), was an Old Bolshevik. He joined the Social Democrats in 1901 and took part in the 1905 revolution. He emigrated in 1908, together with Zinoviev, and became a close associate of Lenin. He returned to Petrograd after the February Revolution of 1917, helping to lead the Bolshevik Party until Lenin's return in April. He served on the editorial board of the newspaper *Pravda* in 1917. He was a full Politburo member in October 1917, and from March 1919 to December 1925. He was Chair of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee (*Vserossiiskii Tsentral'nyi Ispolnitel'nyi komitet*, VTsIK) from 27 October to 8 November 1917. From 1918 to 1926, he was chair of the Moscow Soviet (*Mossovets*); from 1922, chair of Sovnarkom RSFSR; from 1923, director of the Institute of Lenin (*Institut Lenina*); and from 1924, chair of the Council of Labour and Defence (*Sovet truda i oborony*, STO). At the time of the 'literary discussion', he was one of the powerful '*semerka*' (The Seven) that made up the Politburo. After Lenin's death in January 1924, he formed a triumvirate with Stalin

and Zinoviev to take over the leadership, and clashed bitterly with Trotsky over stands he, Kamenev, had taken in 1917 that had placed him at odds with Lenin's positions. After Trotsky's defeat, Kamenev was stripped of power and joined up with Trotsky and Zinoviev in opposition to Stalin. From 1926, he was People's Commissar for Domestic and Foreign Trade of the USSR (*Narkom vneshnei i vnutrennei torgovli sssr*), and from 1926–7, the Soviet ambassador to Italy. He was expelled from the Politburo in October 1926, from the Central Committee in November 1927, and from the party in June 1928. He was in exile in Minusinsk from 1932–3. In 1934, he was director of the Institute of World Literature of the USSR (*Institut mirovoi literatury sssr*). Arrested in December 1934, in the wake of the assassination of Sergei Kirov, the Leningrad Party boss, he was sentenced to five years in prison. In July 1935, he was sentenced again to ten years. He was one of the accused in the Trial of the Sixteen, a show trial held in August 1936 in which the defendants were accused of plotting to assassinate Stalin and other party and state officials. He was sentenced to death, and executed on 25 August 1936. He was rehabilitated by the Supreme Court of the USSR on 13 June 1988. See also **Institute of Lenin; Kirov; Semerka; Show Trials; Trotsky; Zinoviev.**

Semen Ivanovich **Kanatchikov** (1879–1940) was active in the RSDRP in Saratov from 1900, and joined the Moscow committee of the party in 1905. He worked in the St. Petersburg trade-union movement from 1908–10. He spent six years in prison and Siberian exile until 1916. He was active in Siberian politics during his exile and during and after 1917. He became rector of the Communist University in Petrograd in 1921. Shortly after participating in the 'literary discussion', he became head of Istpart in 1925–6 when it was felt that a stronger, more politically orthodox hand was needed in the organisation. He served as TASS correspondent in Czechoslovakia from 1926–8. He was arrested and shot in 1940. See also **Istpart; Nevskii; Russian Social Democracy.**

Anton Vladimirovich **Kartashev** (1875–1960), a Russian Orthodox historian, was educated in Perm' and St. Petersburg, served as Ober-Procurator of the Synod after February 1917, and then became Minister of Religion after the abolition of the former post. In 1919, he left Russia for Estonia where he became Minister of Religion in Iudenich's government. Active in the Russian emigration, he became chair of the Russian National Committee (*Russkii Natsional'nyi Komitet*) in Finland, before moving to Paris, where he became one of the co-founders and professors of the Sviato-Sergievskii Bogoslovskii Institute (1925–60). He is buried at the large Russian émigré cemetery of Ste-Geneviève-des-Bois in the Paris suburbs. See also **Istpart; Iudenich.**

Karl **Kautsky** (1854–1938) was a leading champion of orthodox Marxism after the death of Friedrich Engels. During the First World War, he denounced both Germany's annexationist demands and the pro-war leaders of the SPD. In 1917, he left the party for the

USPD, which united socialists who opposed the war. After the November Revolution of 1918 in Germany, he served in the Foreign Office in the abortive SPD-USPD revolutionary government. His political star waned after the revolution was defeated, and he devoted his advanced years to his writings in Vienna, where he remained until 1938, fleeing Hitler's Anschluss to Amsterdam shortly before his death. He clashed bitterly with Lenin and Trotsky over their differing interpretations of Russia's October Revolution, and the nature of the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia. 'Kautskyists' and 'Kautskyianism' featured in the 'literary discussion' as derogatory terms for those the Bolsheviks deemed to have taken 'opportunistic' positions on the issue of revolution. These could include, i.e. any failure to stress the role of class struggle in the revolutionary fight or any desire to delay the socialist revolution for short-term gains. In this lexicon, any stance that was deemed to undermine internationalism could place an individual in the 'Kautskyian swamp'. See also **Bernstein; Russian Social Democracy**.

'Kautskyianism'. See **Kautsky**.

Aleksandr Fedorovich **Kerensky** (1881–1970), a lawyer, was president of the Provisional Government from June to October 1917. He was a member of the Socialist Revolutionary Party in 1905, and joined the State Duma representing the Labour Group (*trudoviki*) in 1912. A prominent leader in the February Revolution in 1917, he was deputy chairman of the Petrograd Soviet and a member of the Provisional Committee of the State Duma. He served as Minister of Justice in the first Provisional Government, and as Minister of War from early May. He became Commander-in-Chief after the abortive Kornilov Affair. He escaped from the Winter Palace during the October insurrection, and fled abroad. He published widely in the emigration, and edited the newspaper *Golos Rossii* (*Voice of Russia*) in Berlin, the journals *Dni* (*Days*) in Berlin and Paris, and *Novaia Rossiia* (*New Russia*) in Paris. After moving to the United States prior to World War Two, he concentrated all his attention on his émigré activities, particularly at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University where he taught, researched, and spoke publicly on Russian history. In Bolshevik terminology, *Kerenshchina* (*Kerenskyism*) denoted Kerensky's period in office, but later would be applied to any perceived petty-bourgeois government that did not have the interests of the workers at heart. See also **Chernov; Kornilov Affair; Lvov; Natanson; Provisional Government; Socialist Revolutionary Party; Spiridonova**.

The **Kienthal Conference** was an international conference of socialists which met from 24–30 April 1916 in Kienthal, Switzerland to express their opposition to the First World War. It was arranged by the International Socialist Commission as a follow-up to the Zimmerwald conference in 1915. It was attended by representatives from all the major and minor European Social Democratic and socialist parties, including, from Russia,

representatives of the RSDRP(b), the Mensheviks, and the SRs. The conference resolutions condemned the war unequivocally as bourgeois and imperialist, and identified capitalism as its root cause. Other resolutions called for an immediate truce and peace negotiations, to be hastened by pressure from the workers of Europe. See also **Comintern**; **Second International**; **Stockholm Peace Conference**; **Zimmerwald Conference**.

Sergei Mironovich **Kirov**, born Kostrikov, pseud. Serzh (1886–1934), joined the Bolshevik Party in Tomsk in 1904. He was active in the 1905 events, was arrested, and in 1910 moved his revolutionary activities to the Caucasus where he again experienced periods of arrest. He took part in the establishment of Soviet power there after the October Revolution. From 1921 to 1925, he was head of the Bolshevik organisation in Azerbaijan and a leader of the Transcaucasian Federation. He was one of a number of prominent Bolsheviks sent by Stalin to Leningrad in the aftermath of the ‘literary discussion’ to dilute what was then perceived as an anti-Stalin stronghold. In 1926, he replaced Zinoviev as head of the Leningrad party organisation. He was a full member of the Politburo from 1930. By the early 1930s, he was a widely popular Bolshevik leader, and allegedly seen as a potential rival to Stalin. He was assassinated in his office in Leningrad in 1934 by an NKVD assassin, possibly as a pretext for a wave of terror culminating in the great purges in the mid-1930s. See also **Show Trials**.

Vasilii Petrov **Kolarov** (1877–1950) was a Bulgarian Social Democratic who studied law in France and Switzerland. He joined the Bulgarian Social Democratic party in 1897. He became a leader of the revolutionary wing (*‘tesniaki’*) after the split in the party in 1903, and represented this group at the International Socialist Congresses in Stuttgart and Copenhagen after 1905. During the First World War, he adopted an internationalist position, taking part in the Zimmerwald Conference. He was stubbornly anti-war, and this led to the charge against him of state treason, which was amnestied after the war. He helped found the Comintern, and from 1922 was on the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, and from 1923 its General Secretary. In September, Kolarov helped lead the armed insurrection in Bulgaria, for which he received a sentence of 15 years. He fled to Soviet Russia by way of Yugoslavia and Austria, and was a prominent figure in the major congresses of the Comintern. In 1943, he was one of the signatories of the document dissolving the Comintern. He returned to Bulgaria after 1945 when it was under Soviet occupation, and played leading roles in postwar Bulgarian politics, even serving as Prime Minister after Dimitrov’s death in July 1949. Kolarov died in 1950. See also **Blagoev**; **Comintern**; **Kabakchiev**; **September Antifascist Uprising**.

Aleksandr Vasilevich **Kolchak** (1873–1920) was a career officer in the tsarist navy, serving in the Russo-Japanese war and taking command as rear admiral of the Black Sea

fleet during the First World War. Fiercely anti-Bolshevik, he set up a White government in Siberia during the Civil War, proclaiming himself dictator in November 1918, the 'Supreme Ruler and Commander-in-Chief of All Russian Land and Sea Forces'. His most successful offensives were in Eastern Russia, but he was defeated by the Reds in 1919 at Omsk and fled to Irkutsk where he resigned in January 1920. He was arrested by the Bolsheviks and shot in February of the same year. See also **Denikin; Iudenich; Kaledin; Mamontov; Wrangel**'.

Aleksandra Mikhailovna **Kollontai** (1872–1952) was a life-long revolutionary activist, who moved from populism to the RSDRP in 1899, and then to the Bolsheviks, flirted with the Mensheviks, and then moved back to the Bolsheviks in 1915. She spent various periods in European exile up to 1917. After the October Revolution, she became People's Commissar for State Welfare (*Narodnyi komissar gosudarstvennogo prizreniia*) and founded the Women's Department (*Zhenotdel*) in 1919. She was an outspoken advocate of equal rights for women and sexual freedom. Kollontai became a left-wing critic of the RKP(b) in the 1920s in the organised form of the Workers' Opposition. After the defeat of this group, Kollontai was politically sidelined. She was appointed Soviet ambassador to Norway in 1923, and later served as ambassador to Mexico and then to Sweden. See also **Opposition; Populism; Russian Social Democracy**.

Kolupaevs and Razuvaevs are the surnames of merchants from the works of the nineteenth-century satirical writer M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin, including *The Haven of Mon Repo* (*Ubezishche Monrepo*) and *In Foreign Parts* (*Za rubezhom*). They are used here to personify the early capitalist figure in late imperial Russia.

Komsomol (*Kommunisticheskii Soiuz Molodezhi*, Communist Youth League) was created in October 1918 as the Russian Communist Union of Youth (*Rossiiskii kommunisticheskii soiuз molodezhi*, RKSM), Lenin's name being added in 1924 (*Rossiiskii Lenin-skii kommunisticheskii soiuз molodezhi*, RLKSM). This eventual countrywide organisation was intended to school Soviet youth in the values and aspirations of the Communist Party, and it had an enormous influence on the structure of all levels of education in the Soviet Union. The Komsomol leadership, like the leadership of many other Communist organisations, were subjected to the purges of the late 1930s. See also **Show Trials**.

Wilhelm **Könen** (1886–1963) was active in the German Revolution of 1918–19 as commissar of the Workers' and Soldiers' Soviet of the Halle-Merseburg district of Prussia. He joined the KPD from the USPD in 1920, becoming part of its left wing. He was a representative in the Reichstag from 1920–32. After the Nazis came to power, Könen left Germany ultimately for France, where he tried to build a popular front against the

Hitler regime. He spent the pre-war and war years working actively against Nazi Germany from various parts of Western Europe. In 1945, he returned to Germany to help rebuild the KPD, and was prominent in the Socialist Unity Party (SED) of Germany that emerged from the forced postwar merger of the KPD and SPD. He received the Karl Marx Order in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) in 1956. See **Communist Party of Germany**; **German Revolution of 1918–19**; **KPD**.

The **Kornilov affair** (*Kornilovshchina*, aka Kornilov mutiny [*Kornilovskii miatezh*], Kornilov conspiracy [*Kornilovskii zagovor*]), derived its name from General Lavr Georgievich Kornilov (1870–1918), a hero of both the Russo-Japanese War and the First World War. The term refers to the military coup d'état he essayed against the Provisional Government in August 1917, in an attempt to save Russia both from German invasion, and from what he saw as anarchy in the country. Kerensky had appointed Kornilov Commander-in-Chief (*Glavnokomanduiushchii*) in mid-July 1917. Kornilov loathed the Soviets, especially the encroachments of their army committees on military prerogatives. Despite early collaboration between Kerensky and Kornilov, the latter unilaterally moved troops closer to Petrograd on 7 July, a move rubber-stamped by the Provisional Government only on 23 August. Kornilov ordered his troops on Petrograd four days later, and Kerensky appealed to the Petrograd Soviet to help suppress this coup attempt. The coup failed, and Kornilov, and other officers, were imprisoned in Bykhov fortress. See also **Kerensky**; **Provisional Government**.

KPD. See **Communist Party of Germany**.

KPP. See **Communist Party of Poland**.

Krasnaia letopis' (*Red Chronicle*). See **Istpart**.

Krasnaia molodezh' (*Red Youth*) was a monthly student journal published by the Central and Moscow Bureau of Proletarian Students (*Tsentral'noe i Moskovskoe Biuro Proletarskogo Studenchestva*) from May 1924 to November 1925. The journal was edited by Vyacheslav Molotov. It was renamed *Krasnoe Studenchestvo* (*Red Students*). See also **Molotov**.

Krasnaia Niva (*Red Cornfield*) was an illustrated weekly literary journal. It was published in Moscow from 1923–31 and was edited by, among others, Anatolii Lunacharsky. Many of the leading literati of the day published in its pages, including Vladimir Mayakovsky, Aleksei Tolstoy, and Mikhail Sholokhov. See also **Lunacharskii**.

Krasnaia nov' (*Red Virgin Soil*) was a literary 'thick' journal which appeared from 1921 to 1941. It was edited in its first six years by Aleksandr Voronskii, under whom it flourished as a platform for young literary 'fellow-traveller' talent. It was frequently under attack from more orthodox Soviet journals, and Voronskii was eventually accused of Trotskyism and removed.

Karel **Kreibich** (1883–1966) was born in the Sudeten region and joined the local Social Democratic party in 1902. He edited the party newspaper *Vorwärts* in 1906. He moved to the left politically during World War I. He served as a deputy in the Czechoslovak parliament in 1920. He organised a Congress of the left wing of the Sudeten Social Democratic Party at Reichenberg in March 1921, and founded the Sudeten German section of the Czechoslovak Communist Party (*Komunistická strana Československa*, KSČ), which he represented at the Third Congress of the Comintern in June and July 1921. In September, the various communist groups united in the KSČ, and Kreibich served on its Executive Committee until 1924, when he left for Moscow. He resumed that position on his return to Czechoslovakia in 1927. Much of his political life was spent working in the Executive Committee of the Comintern. He fled to England in 1938 after the Munich pact, returning to Czechoslovakia after the war. See also **Comintern**.

Kronstadt, a naval base located in the Gulf of Finland, was founded by Peter the Great in 1703 as a fortress. It was home to some of the most radical sailors in 1917, and had seen a string of mutinies since 1825. Lenin was well-aware of the need to keep control of these restive sailors. Often more radical in their demands than their revolutionary leaders, they had a tendency, in Lenin's view, to push for revolution before it was ready. They famously mutinied against the Bolsheviks in March 1921, in solidarity with striking workers in Petrograd and Moscow, their demands echoing demands frequently heard earlier during the October Revolution, but this time without the Bolsheviks. Their revolt was brutally and unceremoniously crushed. Kronstadt quickly became shorthand in revolutionary lore for steadfast loyalty to revolutionary aspirations, although this myth was muddled by the Bolsheviks' crushing of the Kronstadt mutiny. As such it could be embraced both by Bolsheviks and their opponents for opposite reasons. See also **Opposition**; **NEP**.

Nadezhda Konstantinovna **Krupskaia** (1869–1939) was an Old Bolshevik, and wife of Lenin. Since the early 1890s, she was involved in the Union of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Labour (*Soiuz bor'by za osvobozhdenie rabocheho klassa*), and spent periods of arrest and exile for her activities. She joined the RSDRP in 1898. She emigrated to Germany in 1901 and worked on *Iskra*. In 1905, she returned with Lenin to Russia, leaving for a second period in the emigration during the Reaction. She and Lenin again returned to Russia in April 1917. In 1920, she was chair of the Main

Political Enlightenment (*Glavpolitprosvet*) and also worked on Communist youth and school affairs. Although critical of Trotsky in the 'literary discussion', at the Fourteenth Party Congress in December 1925 she sided with the 'New Opposition' of Zinoviev and Kamenev in their fight against Stalin. She later recanted this position and voted for the removal of Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev from the party. After her death, she was cremated, and her ashes interred in the Kremlin Wall. See also **Lenin; Opposition**.

Kruzhkovshchina (from *kruzhok* for circle; often translated as circle spirit, cliquishness) refers to a peculiar feature of the long development of literary, political, and philosophical ideas in Russia. The tight political and literary circles created by the difficult conditions of tsarist oppression meant that they became extraordinarily inward-looking. While participants in these circles certainly developed intimate friendships and close exchange of ideas, they also developed deep sectarianism and intolerance of opposing ideas. Doctrinal and ideological disagreements kept former friends apart to the ends of their lives. In this atmosphere of hothouse politics, the nascent political parties grew up in Russia in conditions quite distinct from those that obtained in Western Europe. See also **Intelligentsia; Russian Social Democracy**.

Nikolai Vasil'evich **Krylenko** (1885–1938) became a Bolshevik in 1904, and took part in student protests during the 1905 Revolution. He fled abroad in June 1906, returning to St. Petersburg in November. He then endured periods of arrest and flight. From 1911 he worked on the Bolshevik newspapers, *Zvezda* and then *Pravda*. He returned from exile to Moscow in November 1915 and was again arrested. After the February Revolution, he was engaged in agitational activity on behalf of the Bolsheviks. He was in the first Sovnarkom to be constituted after the October Revolution. He also became head of the army (*Verkhovnyi Glavnokomanduiushchii*) in 1917. He served as deputy People's Commissar of Justice RSFSR (*Zamestitel' Narkoma Iustitsii RSFSR*) from 1922–1929, was Prosecutor (*Prokuror*) from 1929–31, and then served as People's Commissar of Justice of the RSFSR until 1936. He was involved in the prosecution of the infamous show trials. In 1938, he came under criticism for 'time-wasting', was expelled from the VKP(b), and shot on 29 July 1938. He was rehabilitated in 1956. See also **Show Trials**.

Aleksandr Mikhailovich **Krymov** (1871–1917) was a Russian general who served in the Russo-Japanese war and on the Rumanian front in the First World War. He was supportive of Guchkov's criticism of the tsar in early 1917. In August, he supported the Kornilov mutiny and was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Petrograd army by Kornilov. He was arrested after the suppression of the mutiny and shot himself in late August. See also **Kornilov Affair**.

Kryzhanovskii was one of a group of special assistants to Trotsky who helped organise and edit Trotsky's writings in the early 1920s. See also **Geller**; **Glazman**; **Lentsner**; **Rovenskaia**; **Rumer**.

Valerian Vladimirovich **Kuibyshev** (1888–1935) joined the Bolshevik faction of the RSDRP in 1904, and engaged in subversive activities after the abortive 1905 Revolution, for which he was exiled to Siberia. He spent the years up to 1917 engaged in revolutionary activities in various cities around the empire, including St. Petersburg. He chaired the revolutionary committee of Samara province during the Civil War, and served as a political commissar. He joined the Central Committee of the party in 1922, was a member of the powerful *semerka* at the time of the polemic, during which he supported Stalin. In the 1920s, he was involved in the Red International of Trade Unions and in leading economic positions in the Supreme Council of the National Economy and in Gosplan into the 1930s. He died suddenly in Moscow in January 1935 of heart failure. See also **Russian Social Democracy**; ***Semerka***.

Kulak (fist) was a late imperial designation for independent farmers who prospered under the Stolypin reforms of 1906. In the Soviet era, the term became a largely political term used to mark a class enemy for exclusion from the proletarian body politic. The kulaks were persecuted as a class during the collectivisation campaigns that began in the late 1920s. They were part of a class delineation of rural society that included *seredniak* (middle peasant) and *bedniak* (poor peasantry). See also **Committees of the Village Poor**.

Béla **Kun** (1886–1939) was a Hungarian Communist and Bolshevik revolutionary. He fought in the First World War for Austria-Hungary, and became a Russian POW in 1916. He became a Communist while a prisoner in the Urals, and edited the Communist journal *Sibirskii Rabochii* (*Siberian Worker*). After October 1917, he moved to Petrograd where he edited a Hungarian trench newspaper *Internatsional'nyi Sotsial-Demokrat* (*International Social Democrat*). In April 1918, he organised the 'Hungarian Group' in the RKP(b), editing the Hungarian newspaper *Sotsial'naia Revoliutsiia* (*Social Revolution*) aimed at Hungarian POWs. At this time, he espoused a politics of revolutionary offensive by all means. He fought for the Bolsheviks during the Civil War, while he was making plans to bring revolution to Hungary. In November 1918, he returned to Hungary, together with several hundred Hungarian Communists. Kun founded the Hungarian Communist Party (*Kommunisták Magyarországi Pártja*) immediately on his arrival in Budapest, as a rival to the much larger Social Democratic Party (*Magyarországi Szociáldemokrata Párt*) already in Hungary. The Social Democrats came to power after national outrage over Hungary's shifting postwar borders toppled the short-lived democratic government of Mihályi Károlyi. The SDS, counting on the Soviet support

they thought Kun would bring, offered a coalition with Kun's Communist Party. Kun instead demanded a merger of the two parties, and the proclamation of a Soviet Republic. The Hungarian Soviet Republic was announced on 21 March 1919. Kun was Commissar for Foreign Affairs in the Republic. It introduced radical Communist measures into Hungary, many of which alienated significant sectors of the population. A failed anti-Communist coup elicited Kun's response of Red Terror in Hungary. After only 133 days, the Allies (Romania and Czechoslovakia with France's backing) finally toppled the Hungarian Soviet Republic. Russia's own Civil War stopped it from coming to Hungary's aid. Power was handed to the Social Democratic Party on 1 August 1919. Kun eventually made it back to Russia where he joined the RKP(b) and became a leading figure in the Comintern. In the 1920s, he worked undercover for the Comintern in Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia. Kun was accused of Trotskyism during the purges in the late 1930s and was arrested in June 1937. He was shot in 1941. He was rehabilitated in 1956. See also **Comintern; Hungarian Revolution; Show Trials**.

Otto Vil'gel'movich **Kuusinen** (1881–1964) was a philosophy teacher who joined the Bolshevik Party in 1904. He undertook party work in Finland until 1921, and from 1921–39 he was on the Presidium and was secretary of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. In 1939, he was appointed head of the puppet government in Finland after its military defeat. He was a member of the CC from 1941, and secretary of the CC from June 1957. From 1940 until 1958 he was deputy chair of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and during the Thaw became a member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. He died in 1964, and his ashes are interred in the Kremlin Wall. See also **Comintern; Finnish Revolution**.

Emmanuil Ionovich **Kviring** (1888–1939) was an economist who joined the Bolsheviks in 1912, and was a member of the CC from 1923–34. From 1917–18 he was secretary of the CC of the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of the Ukraine (КП(б)У), and was chairman of the Sovnarkhoz of the Ukrainian SSR. He was People's Commissar for Communications, and deputy chair of Gosplan. In March 1925, Kviring resigned from the CC of the КП(б)У over its decision in January to recommend Trotsky's removal from the Politburo, despite a majority of RKP(b) Politburo members, Stalin included, recommending against such action. He asked for reassignment to other duties. He became a Doctor of Economics in 1934. He was sentenced to death by the Military Board (*Voennaia kollegiia*) of the Supreme Court of the USSR on 25 November 1937, and died in prison. He was rehabilitated by the same body on 14 March 1956, and was restored to the party on 27 March.

Land Committees (*zemel'nye komitety*) were created in Russia after the February Revolution by the Provisional Government. They were to prepare for the implementation

of the solution to the land question that was deferred until the convening of the Constituent Assembly. When the post-October Bolshevik government enacted the Decree on Land on 26 October (O.S.) 1917, the land committees were charged with enacting it. See also **Constituent Assembly**.

Mikhail Mikhailovich **Lashevich** (1884–1928) joined the RSDRP in 1901 and carried out party work in the provinces. He was subjected to various periods of arrest and imprisonment. He was a deputy to the Petrograd Soviet, a member of the Petrograd Committee of the RSDRP(b), and of the Military Revolutionary Committee. He was involved in military matters in the 1920s, mostly in Western Siberia. He was a supporter of Trotsky and at the Fifteenth Congress of the party in December 1927 he, with other supporters, was expelled from the CC and the party. He recanted and was restored to the party in 1928. He died in a car accident that year. See also **Opposition**.

Martyn Ivanovich **Latsis**, born Jānis Sudrabs (1888–1938), was a Latvian revolutionary and state security official who was a member of the RSDRP(b) from 1905. He took an active part in the 1905 Revolution, and was on the Military Revolutionary Committee in 1917. He joined the Collegium of the Cheka in 1918, and was a fervent advocate of the Red Terror. Latsis was caught up in the Stalinist purges in the 1930s and was arrested for alleged membership in a 'counter-revolutionary nationalist organisation'. He was shot in 1938 and rehabilitated in 1956. See also **Cheka**; **Show Trials**.

Dmitrii Zakharovich **Lebed'** (1893–1937) was a Social Democrat who joined the RSDRP as a Bolshevik in 1909 and conducted agitational work for the party in Ekaterinoslav. He was arrested in January 1917 but released after the February Revolution. In 1917, he was instrumental as a member of the Ekaterinoslav Soviet and as the State Commissar of the militia in arresting former activists from the old regime, including Mensheviks. He was editor of the *Vestnik NKVD* in 1918 in the Ukraine. From 1920, he edited the newspaper *Zvezda* in Ekaterinoslav. He worked in various state and party agencies in the 1920s, and was Second Secretary of the CC of Communist Party of the Ukraine from 1921. He was prominent in the 1920s in the Worker-Peasant Inspectorate of the Ukraine (*Raboche-Krest'ianskaia Inspektsiia Ukrainy*). He was arrested in 1937, accused of Ukrainian nationalism, sentenced to death on 29 October 1937. He was rehabilitated in 1956, and restored to the CPSU posthumously. See also **Cheka**; **Show Trials**.

Georg **Ledebour** (1850–1947) was a German socialist politician and journalist who joined the German Socialist Party (SPD) in 1891. He was in the Reichstag from 1900–18. He voted against German war credits, and took part as an anti-militarist in the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences during the First World War. He was co-founder of the Independent Socialist Party (USPD) in 1917. He was one of the leaders of the Ber-

lin communist uprising of January 1919. After the defeat of the uprising, he was briefly under arrest. He returned to the Reichstag from 1920 to 1924 as head of the USPD, although he opposed any merger between the USPD and either the KPD or SPD, preferring instead a unification of all revolutionary forces. See also **German Revolution of 1918–19**; **Kienthal Conference**; **Zimmerwald Conference**.

Left Communists. See **Opposition**.

Left Deviations was the term given by the Bolsheviks to convey the intolerability of unorthodox political trends inside the Bolshevik Party. Boycottists (*boikotisty*) were a group of extreme leftists, led by A.A. Bogdanov, who were against participating in the Third Duma in 1907, and were sharply criticised for this by Lenin. Lenin expelled Bogdanov, Lunacharsky and other Boycottists from the Bolshevik camp, and in 1910 the Bolsheviks committed themselves to severing all remaining connections with the Boycottists. Recallists (*otzovisty*) split off from the Boycottists. They rejected all legal forms of mass party work and demanded the immediate recall of the Duma delegates from the Third Duma in 1908. Ultimatists (*ultimatisty*) also emerged from the Boycottists. They were a little less extreme than the Otzovists, urging an ultimatum that the RSDRP fraction in the Duma either obey CC instructions to the letter or resign. Lenin opposed the Recallists and Ultimatists. God-Constructivists (*bogostroiteli*) included Bogdanov, Lunacharsky, and Gorky, who, building on empiriocriticism (i.e. the idea of modernising Marx with new approaches to his theoretical concepts), believed that for socialism to have broad appeal it had to have the attributes of a religion, but minus any belief in the existence of God. God-constructivists grew out of discussions with god-seekers (*bogoiskateli*) like the religious philosophers Nikolai Berdiaev and Sergei Bulgakov, who were arguing at the turn of the century for new ways to find God. God-constructivists, along with other boycottists, otzovists, and ultimatists, were vehemently opposed by Lenin. These members formed their own group in that year around a new newspaper *Vpered* (*Forward*), becoming known as the Vperedists. They convened to discuss and teach their ideas on the Italian island of Capri from August to December 1909 as a factional school in the RSDRP. The Vperedists and the Capri school were condemned at an enlarged editorial board meeting of the Bolsheviks newspaper *Proletarii* (*Proletarian*) in June 1909, which led to their expulsion. In the 'literary discussion', the term Vperedism was employed as a summary dismissal of all these early attempts to explore such countervailing philosophical approaches in the pre-revolutionary era. See also **Conciliators**; **Opposition**; **Show Trials**; **Vacillators**.

Left Kadets. See **Kadets**.

Legal Marxism. See **Bernstein**.

Karl **Legin** (1861–1920) was a German trade-union activist and a rightist Social Democrat, tagged as a revisionist. From 1890, he was chair of the General Commission of Trade Unions of Germany, and, from 1913, chair of the International Secretariat of Trade Unions. He opposed the October Revolution in Russia. Together with other rightist Social Democrats, he helped suppress the November 1918 revolutionary movement in Germany. See also **Bernstein**; **German Revolution of 1918–19**.

The **Lena massacre** of 1912 at the Lena goldfields in Siberia was the government response to widespread strikes among workers in the goldfields. Government troops opened fire on the strikers, killing hundreds. Bolsheviks, and other revolutionaries, invoked it as a typical example of bourgeois brutality, and sought to make it an iconic event in revolutionary lore and a rallying point for the coming revolutionary struggle. See also **Aurora**; **Finland Station**; **Peter and Paul Fortress**; **Sealed Train**; **Smolny**, **Winter Palace**; **Zaria Svobody**.

Vladimir Il'ich **Lenin** (1870–1924) was a long-time revolutionary activist from the end of the 1880s. He exerted seminal influence in the Marxist journal *Iskra*, was pivotal in the split in the RSDRP in 1903 into Bolshevik and Menshevik factions, and was often a lone voice against any kind of accommodation in the socialist movement with what he saw as an imperialist war during the First World War. He spent long periods of exile in Europe, notably his second period of foreign exile, from 1908 until April 1917. He was leader of the October armed insurrection in Petrograd in 1917, chair of Sovnarkom after the October Revolution, and initiator of the Comintern in 1919. In the final weeks of 1922 and the first week of 1923, Lenin, largely in convalescent isolation in Gorky on the outskirts of Moscow, wrote a document proposing changes to the party and state ruling bodies. This document eventually came to be known as a 'Testament'. He famously criticised Stalin's 'crudeness' and suggested he be removed as General Secretary of the party. Lenin was less condemnatory, although still critical, of Trotsky, Bukharin, and Piatakov. He wanted the document to be read at the Twelfth Party Congress in April 1923, although his declining health led Krupskaya to keep it secret until after his death. Kamenev read out the document to the Thirteenth Party Congress a year later, and it gradually became more widely circulated in the party, although Stalin was never removed as General Secretary. About nine months after Lenin's death, the 'literary discussion' began at a time when official efforts to mythicise him were gathering steam. In the 'literary discussion', he featured as an ideological paragon, the arbiter of the application of Marxist teachings to Russia (Marxism-Leninism as a separate doctrine). The near obsessive multiple references to Lenin's writings in the pieces of the 'literary discussion' were evidence of an emergent criterion of ideological purity, the basis of the new Lenin Cult, replete with marble mausoleum. See also **Institute of Lenin**; *Iskra*; **Istpart**.

The **Lenin Levy** refers to a major campaign launched at the Thirteenth Party Conference from 16–18 January 1924 to recruit large numbers of workers into the Communist Party. It was repeated in 1925 and 1927. The 1924 levy in particular was credited with bringing about major demographic and ideological changes in the makeup of the party or alternatively criticised for flooding the party with unschooled working-class elements which were unready for the difficult revolutionary tasks ahead. See also **Lenin; Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**.

Lenin's Testament. See **Lenin**.

Navum Mikhailovich **Lentsner** (1902–36) was an editor and journalist. He graduated from the Institute of Red Professors (*Institut Krasnoi Professury*) in 1926. He worked as a secretary for Trotsky, and edited his three-volume collected works. He was in the Belarussian SSR from 1932, and edited the newspapers *Rabochii* (*Worker*) and *Zvezda* (*Star*). He was arrested and shot in 1936, and rehabilitated in 1956. See **Geller; Glazman; Kryzhanovskii; Rovenskaia; Rumer**.

Paul **Levi** (1883–1930) was a German lawyer, and a political ally and confidant of Rosa Luxemburg. After the murder of Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht in 1919, he became head of the Communist Party of Germany. By late 1920, he was increasingly accused of 'centrism', after partially successful efforts to move the party away from the goal of achieving immediate revolution to one of creating a mass party of broader swathes of workers. He was expelled from the KPD in March 1921 after publicly criticising the party and its leadership. He returned to the Social Democratic Party, where he set up a left wing. Levi wrote a critical reconsideration of the Bolshevik Revolution, first in his introduction to Luxemburg's early pamphlet *The Russian Revolution* in 1921 and later in an introduction to Trotsky's 'The Lessons of October'. In the 1920s, he represented defendants, including Bertolt Brecht, in some of the 'treason' trials held in Germany. He also helped reinvestigate the murders of Luxemburg and Liebknecht. He died in 1930, after falling from his fifth-floor attic room in Berlin. See also **Communist Party of Germany**.

Konstantin Osipovich **Levitskii** (1868–1919) was active in Social-Democratic organisations in Odessa from 1901. He joined the Bolsheviks in 1903. He was exiled to Siberia for his activities in the 1905 Revolution, and exiled again in 1907 to Astrakhan. During the First World War, he broke with many former comrades by defending the need to repel the German threat. He also disagreed with his comrades over the timing of the October insurrection. After October 1917 he worked in the Soviet.

Mikhail 'Mark' Isaakovich **Liber**, born Gol'dman (1880–1937), was one of the leaders of the Bund and a Menshevik, who began his political career in the late 1880s. He headed the Bund delegation to the Second Congress of the RSDRP in 1903. He played an active role in the August Bloc in 1912. He was later criticised by the Bolsheviks as a 'social chauvinist' for his actions in the First World War. After the February Revolution of 1917, he was on the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, and called for support of the Provisional Government but opposed direct socialist participation in it. He was opposed to what he saw as an illegitimate Bolshevik coup in October 1917. Liber was the Bund's key leader in Petrograd at this time. His close collaboration with Dan earned them and their followers the derogatory sobriquet of 'Liberdans' (*Liberdantsy*) and their moderate views on socialist revolution earned them the term 'Liberdanism' (*Liberdanstvo*). Liber was arrested in 1921, spending several months in Butyrki prison in Moscow. In 1922, he protested against the death sentences handed out to prominent SRs at the 'Trial of the Right SRs' in Moscow. He was soon arrested again and sentenced to three years in prison, but fell ill. He was spent the years from 1924 to 1930 in exile in Semipalatinsk and in prison. He was rearrested in 1935, and exiled to Alma-Ata. In March 1937, he was arrested there, and shot on 4 October 1937. He was rehabilitated in 1958 for that particular charge, and rehabilitated completely in 1990. See also **Bund**; **Dan**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

Karl **Liebknecht** (1871–1919) was a German socialist who joined the SPD in 1900. His anti-militarist writings led to his arrest in 1907 and imprisonment for 18 months. He was prominent in the Second International and a founder of the Youth Socialist International. In 1912, he served in the Reichstag as a left-wing SPD member. During the war, he was highly critical of Kautsky's leadership of the Social Democrats. In late 1914, he, together with Rosa Luxemburg, Leo Jogiches, Paul Levi, Franz Mehring, and others, founded the Spartacist League (*Spartakusbund*), which later became the Communist Party of Germany. His most significant role was in the Spartacist uprising in 1919. He was assassinated, along with Luxemburg, in the same year. Both he and Luxemburg became martyrs in Marxist revolutionary lore. See also **Communist Party of Germany**; **German Revolution of 1918–19**; **Luxemburg**; **Second International**.

Fedor Fedorovich **Linde** (1881–1917) was a revolutionary who joined the Bolshevik faction in 1905. He was arrested and exiled to Siberia for two years for his revolutionary activities in 1912, although this was commuted to exile abroad. On his return to Russia in 1914, he served in the army, and after February 1917 agitated among soldiers in support of insurrection. He was a soldier deputy on the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet. He was killed in disturbances resulting from his speech to a crowd of soldiers.

Liquidationism (*likvidatorstvo*) and **Liquidators** were used, by Lenin among others, as unflattering terms to describe the practice of moderate Social Democrats, especially the Mensheviks, of favouring legal activities (as opposed to underground activities) with a view to building a mass party in Russia. This grew directly out of the split in the RSDRP at the Second Congress of the party over the future form of the party. See also **Mensheviks**; **Opposition**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

Litsom k derevne. See 'Face to the Village'.

Georgii Ippolitovich **Lomov**, born Oppokov (1888–1938), joined the RSDRP in 1903 and gravitated towards the Bolshevik faction. He took part in the 1905 Revolution, worked in Moscow and Petersburg party politics until 1917, and was active in the October insurrection. He experienced several periods of arrest and exile between 1910 and 1917. As a Left Communist, he opposed the Brest Peace. In the 1920s, he worked in party politics in Siberia, and into the 1930s he was on the Presidium of VSNKh and was a deputy chair of Gosplan. He was arrested in June 1937, and shot on 30 December 1938. He was rehabilitated in 1956. See also **Left Deviations**; **Opposition**.

Jean-Laurent-Frederick **Longuet** (1876–1936), a French socialist, was the grandson of Karl Marx. He was editor of the newspaper *Le Populaire*. He held a pacifist position during the First World War, after which he became a socialist deputy in the French Chamber of Deputies. His pacifist position became prominent in the French Section of the Workers' International (SFIO). When the Communists gained a majority at the Tours Congress of 1920, he joined the centrist Two and a Half International. He was roundly criticised by Trotsky in December 1919 for aiding the 'parliamentary lieutenants of imperialism' and for sacrificing his internationalist principles for nationalist concerns. See also **Comintern**; **Second International**.

A. **Lozovskii**, born Solomon Abramovich Dridzo (1878–1952), was a party activist who joined SD circles in 1901 in Khar'kov and Ekaterinoslav. He moved to St. Petersburg in 1903, and was arrested for his radical organisational activity. He was exiled to Kazan, where he joined the local Bolshevik organisation. He took part in demonstrations there during the October Days of 1905. He was arrested and exiled repeatedly during his political career, ending up in Paris in 1909, where he joined the RSDRP(b) group there. In Paris he was also the secretary of the Labour Bureau for Russian Émigrés (*Biuro Trudalia russkikh emigrantov*), and was a member of the French Socialist Party. He returned to Russia in June 1917, and was elected secretary of the All-Russian Central Council of Trade Unions (*Vserossiiskii Tsentral'nyi Soiuz Professional'nykh Soiuzov*, or VTsSPS). He was expelled from the RKP(b) in January 1918 for perceived oppositional activities. From March 1918 to December 1919, he was chair of the Central Committee of the RSDRP

(Internationalists) (*Tsentral'nyi Komitet RSDRP (Internatsionalistov)*), and editor of its central organ, *Proletarii* (*Proletarian*). In 1920, he was one of the founders of Profintern or the Red International of Labour Unions (*Krasnyi internatsional profsoiuzov*), and devoted his professional life to the international labour movement. From 1945–8, he was chair of Sovinformburo. He was caught up in the Soviet anti-Semitic campaign in the early postwar period and, after a closed trial, was executed on 12 August 1952. He was rehabilitated in 1956 by Premier Nikita Khrushchev. See also **Opposition; Russian Social Democracy**.

Luch. See *Rabochaia gazeta*.

Anatolii Vasil'evich **Lunacharsky** (1875–1933) was part of the Social-Democratic movement from 1895. After the 1903 split, he became a Bolshevik, and a prominent ally in Lenin's fight with the Mensheviks. He took an active role in both the 1905 and October 1917 revolutions. He experienced various periods of arrest and exile for his activities. He was close to Bogdanov, and worked on *Novaia zhizn'*. During the Reaction, he clashed with Lenin on certain philosophical issues, and in 1909 was part of the extreme left Recallist and Vperedist groups. As a member of the Vpered group, he helped create the party schools for Russian workers in Capri and Bologna in 1909. He was severely criticised by Lenin for his 'empiriocriticist' views at this time. After the February Revolution, he was a member of the *mezhraiontsy*. He supported the Bolshevik line at the Petrograd Soviet on 25 October 1917. He was the first People's Commissar of Enlightenment (*Narodnyi komissar prosveshcheniia*) until 1929, responsible for establishing a Soviet socialist system of education. He was highly influential in the cultural life of the 1920s, particularly in fostering an explicitly proletarian literature through such organisations as Proletkul't (*Proletarian Culture*). He was 'exiled' as a plenipotentiary to Spain from 1933, but died on the way there. His remains are interred in the Kremlin Wall. See also **Left Deviations; Mezhraiontsy; Opposition**.

Rosa **Luxemburg** (1870–1919) was a Polish-born revolutionary and one of the most significant figures in the German Left. She began her activities in socialist circles in Warsaw, but shifted her attention at the turn of the century to German socialism when she moved to Germany, becoming a Marxist theoretician in the SPD. She was a fierce opponent of Bernstein's revisionism and later Kautsky's centrist views. She had close ties with the revolutionary movement in Russia, although she was critical of the rising Lenin's early views in the first five years of the century. Up to and during the First World War, she became an internationalist and helped found the *Die Internationale* group, the forerunner of the Spartacist League, which she would co-found with Liebknecht. After a period of arrest for her activities, she again expressed her criticism of some of Lenin's views on constituent peoples' right to self-determination, on transforming the

imperialist war in to a civil war, and on the urgency of the need to found the Third International. Shortly after the founding congress of the Communist Party of Germany in December 1918–January 1919, at which the Spartacist League changed its name, she, along with Liebknecht, was arrested and assassinated. Lenin praised her service highly after her death. Both she and Liebknecht became martyrs in Marxist revolutionary lore. See also **Bernstein; Communist Party of Germany; German Revolution of 1918–19; Kautsky; Liebknecht.**

Prince Georgii Evgen'evich **Lvov** (1861–1925) was a tsarist statesman and the first Prime Minister of Russia after the February Revolution. In the late imperial period, he organised relief work during the Russo-Japanese War, and joined the Kadet party in 1905. He served in the First Duma, and was chair of the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos in 1914. He became head of the Provisional Government after Tsar Nicholas II's abdication. He resigned in July 1917, his place being taken by Kerensky. Lvov was arrested after the Bolsheviks took power, but escaped and fled to Paris, where he lived out his life. See also **Kerensky; Provisional Government.**

James Ramsay **MacDonald** (1866–1937), a British Labour politician, was twice Prime Minister of Britain (1924 and 1931–5). As Foreign Secretary in 1924, he set about undoing the damage, as he saw it, caused by the Versailles Treaty of 1919, and especially settling the reparations issue without destroying Germany financially. While promoting an Anglo-German commercial treaty, he also announced new negotiations in 1924 on a politically unpopular Anglo-Soviet trade agreement. In an attempt to force agreement on this issue, among others, MacDonald called a snap election, which the Labour Party lost, in part because of a letter purportedly sent by Zinoviev, head of the Comintern, to his British counterpart in the organisation, expressing support for the agreement as a way of revolutionising the British proletariat. The forged letter was published by the *Daily Mail*, and it did irreparable harm to the election campaign, allowing the Conservative Party to come to power. See also **Baldwin; British Labour Party.**

Ernst **Mach** (1838–1916) was an Austrian physicist and philosopher who influenced neopositivism. As a system of thought, Machism was sharply criticised by Lenin in his 1908 work *Materialism and Empiriocriticism*, and by other leading Russian Marxists. See also **Left Deviations.**

Konstantin **Mamontov** (1869–1920) was a career officer in the tsarist army who rose to the rank of major general as a commander of Don Cossack regiments during the First World War. A vocal opponent of the Bolsheviks after 1917, he served as a commander in the White Army in the Don region during the Civil War. In August and September 1919, he led the so-called 'Mamontov Raid' [*raid Mamontova*] to disrupt the offensive

being planned by the Red Army on the Southern Front. Despite some initial successes, his forces suffered heavy losses and were eventually defeated. Mamontov fought on in alliance with another White general, but succumbed to typhus in Ekaterinodar in February 1920. See also **Denikin; Iudenich; Kaledin; Kolchak; Wrangel**'.

The **Mariinsky Palace** (*Mariinskii dvorets*) in St. Petersburg was the site of significant political developments in 1917. Built in 1839–44, the palace became the official residence of the Leuchtenberg princes from 1845, and was named in honour of the daughter of Nicholas I, the Grand Duchess Mariia Nikolaevna. It housed the State Council of the Russian Empire (*Gosudarstvennyi Sovet Rossiiskoi Imperii*), and the Council of Ministers (*Sovet Ministrov*) prior to the February 1917 revolution. The Provisional Government gave the palace over to the Pre-parliament. Soviet ministries and academies were housed in the palace after October 1917. See also **Finland Station; Peter and Paul Fortress; Sarai and Shalash; Winter Palace**.

Nikolai Evgen'evich **Markov** (1866–1945) was an extreme right-wing Russian politician and publicist of noble descent. From 1910 he was chair of the monarchist and Black Hundred group, Union of the Russian People (*Soiuz russkogo naroda*). He was active in Duma politics. Obviously hostile to the Bolshevik insurrection in 1917, he worked actively against the new government, joining in 1918 the volunteer 'Northern Army' in German-occupied territories. He moved into the emigration in 1920 or 1921, editing a right-wing, monarchist Russian journal, *Dvukhglavyi orel* (*Two-Headed Eagle*). In 1935 in Erfurt, he joined the Russian section of the Nazi *Mirovaia sluzhba* (World Service), the so-called 'Antisemitic International'. He continued his anti-semitic activities until his death in Wiesbaden, Germany just before the end of the war. See also **Black Hundreds; Purishkevich**.

Iulii **Martov**, born Iu. O. Tsederbaum (1873–1923), was a prominent Social Democrat, and a founder of the Union of the Struggle for the Liberation of the Working Class (*Soiuz bor'by za osvobozhdenie rabocheho klassa*) in St. Petersburg in 1895. He was a founding member of *Iskra* in 1900. He split from Lenin at the Second Congress of the RSDRP, became a leader of the Menshevik faction, and was an Internationalist during the First World War. In mid-1917, he joined the Pre-parliament. He regarded the October Revolution as little more than an illegitimate coup d'état. After he left Soviet Russia in 1920, he kept up a sustained critique of Bolshevik policies from the emigration, first in Berlin, and later in Paris and the United States. He helped organise the Two and a Half International. See also **Dan; Two and a Half International; Russian Social Democracy; Sotsialisticheskii vestnik**.

Aleksandr Samoilovich **Martynov** (Piker) (1865–1935) began his revolutionary career in the People's Will (*Narodnaia volia*) in 1884. He was arrested and exiled to Siberia. He later joined the Social Democrats, and became one of the leaders of the 'economists'. He joined the Mensheviks after 1903, and became a leading publicist in their ranks. He was again arrested in 1906, and emigrated after his release. He was an Internationalist during the First World War, and a member of the Foreign Secretariat of the Organizing Committee of Mensheviks (*Zagranichnyi Sekretariat OK Men'shevikov*), and a close associate of Martov, with whom he returned to Russia in May 1917. He was an active Menshevik throughout 1917, and on the editorial board of *Rabochaia gazeta* (*The Workers' Newspaper*). He took part in the Democratic Conference in September 1917. After October 1917, he moved to the Ukraine and left party work. After the NEP was introduced, he reconciled with the Bolsheviks, and joined the RKP(b) at its Twelfth Congress in 1923. He worked in the Institute of Marx and Engels, and was sharply criticised by the Mensheviks abroad for his recent activities. From 1924 he worked in the Comintern and was on the editorial board of the journal, *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional* (*Communist International*), until his death in 1935. See also **Comintern**; **Democratic Conference**; **Mensheviks**; **Populism**.

Marxism, as it is featured in the 'literary discussion', functions as the standard of theoretical purity by which political and ideological credentials and authority are measured. The participants trace a range of acceptability from Lenin's sacrosanct application of Marxist theory to Russian practice via legal Marxists' too-narrow and self-defeating application of Marxism to the wrong-headed or at worst treacherous revisions of Marxism by the Economists, the Bernsteinian reformists, Cunow, Trotsky, among many.

Ivan Fedorovich **Mavrin** (1894–1938) was a revolutionary activist who organised strikes in various factories in St. Petersburg, notably the Siemens and Halske (*Simens-Khal'ske*) plant in 1912. He joined the Bolshevik Party in 1913 in St. Petersburg. He was arrested in 1916 for illegal revolutionary activity and was exiled to Siberia. He returned after the February Revolution. He was active among the workers, and became chair of the plant committee at the Erickson plant. He was involved in organising the Red Guards for the October insurrection.

Franz **Mehring** (1846–1919) was a German politician, publicist, and historian, who joined the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) in 1891. During the First World War, he moved to the left of the SPD and helped found the left-wing revolutionary Spartacist League. He welcomed the October Revolution in Russia. He was the author of a major biography of Karl Marx. He died barely two weeks after his comrades and co-founders of the League, Luxemburg and Liebknecht, were assassinated. See also

Communist Party of Germany; German Revolution of 1918–19; Liebknecht; Luxemburg.

Menshevik Internationalists. See **Mensheviks.**

The **Mensheviks** ('Minority Group') emerged as a reluctant faction of the RSDRP after Martov and Lenin's clash at the party's Second Congress in Brussels and London in 1903. Lenin wanted the party to be an elite, centralised band of professional revolutionaries, while Martov wanted a more open membership policy on the model of the mass Social-Democratic parties of Western Europe. In essence, Mensheviks supported an orthodox Marxist model of bourgeois revolution that would at a later undefined point give way to a socialist revolution. Given this model, some Mensheviks, like Potresov and Garvi, dedicated themselves to legal work in mass labour organisations and were dubbed 'liquidationists' by the Bolsheviks. Still others, including Martov, Dan, and Plekhanov, advocated both legal and illegal work. Many of these Mensheviks were forced into the emigration during the tsarist repression after 1907. The Mensheviks were less a formal party than a loose group of like-minded individuals. During the First World War, without the discipline of a formal structure, they splintered across the political spectrum over the issue of whether to support or oppose the tsar's prosecution of the war. 'Defencists', including Plekhanov and Potresov, took a patriotic stance; 'Internationalists', like Martov and Axelrod, wanted to end Russia's participation in it. After February 1917, they splintered again on the issue of co-operation with the Provisional Government. Some collaborated with Socialist Revolutionaries in the Soviets, while others joined the Provisional Government alongside the Constitutional Democrats (Kadets). Martov's Internationalists rejected any such co-operation, championing instead an all-socialist coalition government. After what they regarded as a Bolshevik insurrection in October 1917, the Mensheviks were forced increasingly onto the defensive. Inside Soviet Russia, they suffered political repression at the hands of the Bolsheviks, and many of the leaders of the Menshevik Internationalists emigrated to Europe, where some of them sustained a decades-long critique of the Soviet state, notably through the newspaper *Sotsialisticheskii vestnik*. While the Mensheviks had always been reluctant to profile themselves as a distinct party, the Bolsheviks consistently referred to them as such, all the better to define them as a coherent adversary (notwithstanding the clearly distinct trends within the Menshevik movement). The term ultimately devolved into a caricature, a catchall term of socialist betrayal, even spawning such odd hybrids as 'White Menshevik scoundrel' (*belomen'shevistskii prokhodimets*) in the 'literary discussion'. See also **Liquidationism; Opposition; Russian Communist Party (bolshevik); Russian Social Democracy.**

The *mezhraiontsy* or *mezhraionka* (Interdistrict Organisation of the RSDRP, officially the RSDRP (Internationalists)) was a group of moderate internationalists in Petrograd. Formed in 1913 by a small number of Bolsheviks, it was led by Konstantin Iurenev, until May 1917 when Trotsky took over. After the July Days, and the political suppressions in which Trotsky was imprisoned in Kresty prison, the *mezhraionka* (now some four thousand strong) merged with the Bolsheviks at the Sixth Congress of the RSDPR(b) in July–August 1917, after several overtures from Lenin. See also **Trotsky**.

G.I. **Miasnikov** (1889–1946) joined the Bolsheviks in 1906 and conducted party agitation in the Urals. He was in Petrograd from 1921 onwards, and at that time began to champion workers' supervision of industrial production through trade unions and factory committees. He was a leader of the Workers' Opposition. By late 1921, Miasnikov's calls for free expression were putting him on a collision course with the Bolshevik Party. Lenin was initially reluctant to come down too hard on him, but by early 1922 his criticism of Miasnikov joined the Bolshevik chorus against him. He was expelled from the party in 1922, later arrested, and then sent into exile in Berlin for criticising the party. In the wake of his exile, the OGPU arrested some 30 members of his 'Workers' Group of the RKP'. See also **Opposition**.

The Petrograd **Military Revolutionary Committee** (*Voенно-революционныi komitet*, or VRK) was responsible for the military organisation of the October Revolution. The VRK was created on 16 October 1917 when Provisional Government plans to transfer to the front 'unreliable' units of the Petrograd garrison were interpreted by the Bolsheviks, and by Trotsky in particular, as a direct threat to the success of Bolshevik revolutionary plans. Its first meeting was held in Smolny on 20 October, and was chaired by the SR Pavel Lazimir. During the October events, the VRK coordinated the armed seizure of the city by thousands of soldiers, sailors, and armed workers.

Pavel Nikolaevich **Miliukov** (1859–1943) was a historian and leader of the Constitutional Democratic (Kadet) Party, which he helped found in 1905. He was the main Kadet spokesman in the Third and Fourth Dumas from 1907–17. Miliukov supported Russia's war effort and the monarchy, although he was critical of the latter's ability to prosecute that war effort. After the abdication of Nicholas II in March 1917, Miliukov became the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the first Provisional Government under Prince Lvov. He fled to Europe after the Bolshevik victory in October 1917, eventually settling in Paris where he wrote copiously on Russian culture and Russian revolutionary history. See also **Duma**; **Kadets**.

Vladimir Pavlovich **Miliutin** (1884–1937) joined the Social-Democratic movement in 1903, first supporting the Mensheviks and from 1910 the Bolsheviks. After the February

Revolution, he was a member of the Saratov committee of the RSDRP(b) and chair of the Saratov Soviet. He was People's Commissar for Agriculture (*Narodnyi komissar zemledeliia*) in the first Soviet government, and from 1918–21 chair of the Supreme Council on the National Economy. In the 1920s, he was the Comintern representative in Austria and the Balkans. From 1924 to 1927 he was on the board of the Worker and Peasant Inspectorate. He was arrested in July 1937 and sentenced to death for belonging to a Rightist organisation. He was shot in October, and rehabilitated in 1956. See also **Mensheviks; Russian Social Democracy.**

Mir (*World*) was the official newspaper of the Bulgarian government from 1923.

Viacheslav Mikhailovich **Molotov**, born Skriabin (1890–1986), joined the Bolshevik Party in 1906 and participated actively in the October Revolution in 1917. He became the secretary of the CC of the Communist Party of the Ukraine. He was also secretary of the CC of the RKP(b) through the 1920s, and chair of Sovnarkom USSR in the 1930s. He was particularly noted for signing the infamous Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact with Nazi Germany in August 1939. After Stalin's death in 1953, he became People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the USSR (*Narodnyi komissar inostrannykh del SSSR*), in which capacity he travelled widely in the Eastern Bloc and in the West. He was a long-serving member of the Politburo from 1926 to 1957. In many ways the archetypical Old Bolshevik, he was unusual in not sharing the fate of many of his comrades. See **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik); Show Trials.**

MRC. See **Military Revolutionary Committee.**

Nachalo (*Beginning*) was the main organ of the SD Mensheviks. It published in St. Petersburg for sixteen issues in November and December 1905, and was edited by, among others, Dan, Martov, Martynov, Parvus, and Trotsky.

'**Narrow Socialists**'. See **Bulgarian Communist Party.**

Narodism. See **Populism.**

Nashe delo. See *Nasha zaria*.

Nashe slovo (*Our Word*) was one of the publications of the SD Internationalists in Paris. Its predecessor, *Golos* (*Voice*), had published in Paris from September 1914, and had become a rallying point for internationalists who were against the war. The French government quickly banned it in January 1915. *Nashe slovo* succeeded it, and was published there from January 1915 to September 1916. Leading Social Democrats, including Axelrod, Martov, Martynov, and Trotsky, collaborated on it.

Nashe zaria (*Our Dawn*) was a monthly legal magazine published in St. Petersburg from January 1910 to September 1914. Its contributors included prominent Social Democrats like Dan, Martov, and Potresov, and also featured various articles by Trotsky that were critical of Bolshevism. In the 'literary discussion', it was generally derided as the platform of 'liquidationist', 'social-chauvinist' and 'legalist' tendencies. It was replaced by *Nashe delo* (*Our Cause*) in January 1915, of which six issues appeared. Although it was mildly critical of tsarism, it advocated support for the tsarist government in the war against Germany. See also **Dan**; **Liquidationism**; **Martov**; **Potresov**.

Mark Andreevich **Natanson** (1850–1919) was a Russian revolutionary and co-founder of the *Land and Liberty* (*Zemlia i Volia*) populist organisation and of the SR party. He was an Internationalist during the First World War, and attended the Zimmerwald and Kienthal conferences. After his return to Russia after February 1917, he was a member of the Left SRs who supported the Bolsheviks during and after the October Revolution, even briefly entering the new Soviet government. Hostile to the Brest Peace, the Left SRs quit the government in protest, and some even opposed the Bolsheviks militarily, although Natanson opposed that course of action. He founded the Party of Revolutionary Communists (*Partiia revoliutsionnogo kommunizma*) and this group eventually merged with the CPSU. Still critical of some of Lenin's policies, he soon left Russia for Switzerland. See **Kienthal Conference**; **Populism**; **Socialist Revolutionary Party**; **Zimmerwald Conference**.

NEP, the New Economic Policy (*Novaia Ekonomicheskaiia Politika*), was proclaimed by Lenin in March 1921 after a spate of popular unrest over the continuation of harsh Civil War policies, notably forced grain requisitioning. Near insurrections in the Tambov region had been accompanied by unrest in the cities and by a revolt of sailors in Kronstadt. The NEP was a step back from these policies, allowing the peasantry a degree of freedom of use of the land and its produce, and also a certain degree of private enterprise in the economy. This allowed for the rise of the 'bag-men' (*meshochniki*), individuals who had engaged in private trade during the Civil War, and who in the NEP facilitated, in a semi-legal status, the new private goods market. They were often vilified as speculators and black-marketeers by the Soviet authorities. The goal of the NEP was economic recovery and thus political survival for the Bolsheviks. The NEP was not uncontroversial, and was rejected by many staunch Communists as a betrayal of the goals they had championed for so long. As a backdrop to the 'literary discussion', it was for many one more proof that revolutionary goals were being undermined and blunted by countervailing developments. See also **Bag-men**; **Kronstadt**.

Die Neue Zeit (*The New Times*) was a German socialist theoretical newspaper of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD) and published from 1883–1923. It was edited

by Kautsky, and later by Heinrich Cunow. It featured articles from the major socialist theoreticians of the era, including Liebknecht and Luxemburg. See also **Cunow**; **Kautsky**.

Vladimir Ivanovich **Nevskii**, born F.I. Krivobokov (1876–1937), joined the Social-Democratic movement in 1897, became a Bolshevik publicist, and took part in the 1905 and October revolutions. He was a member of the Petrograd Military Revolutionary Committee. In 1918, he became People's Commissar of Transport (*Narkom putei soobshcheniia*), and was deputy chair of VTsIK from 1919–20. In the 1920s, he was heavily involved in creating the new Soviet canon through his involvement in the Sverdlov Communist University (*Kommunisticheskii universitet im. Sverdlova*), as director of the Lenin Library (*Biblioteka im. Lenina*), and on the board of Istpart. He was arrested in 1935 and sentenced to five years of hard labour, but was sentenced to death in 1937. He was rehabilitated in 1955. See also **Istpart**.

The New Opposition. See **Opposition**.

Viktor Pavlovich **Nogin** (1878–1924) was a Marxist who took part in the organisation of strikes in Petersburg plants in 1897–8. He joined the Bolshevik faction of the RSDRP in 1903 and contributed to *Iskra* (*Spark*). After the 1905 Revolution, he fought for legal workers' organisations, and in 1911 was dubbed a conciliator for his readiness to collaborate with Mensheviks and SRS. After the October insurrection, he advocated a broad Soviet government that would have included the Mensheviks and other socialist parties. From 1918 on, he held a variety of government posts in trade and industry. On 4 November 1917, Nogin signed a joint declaration, together with Kamenev, Zinoviev, and Rykov, to the VTsIK on the need for a socialist government made up of all the Soviet parties, believing it was the only way to avoid the Bolshevik use of widespread political terror. He quickly recanted these views, however, and served his final few years in minor political posts. He died in May 1924. See also **Conciliators**; **'homogeneous socialist government'**; **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

Novaia zhizn' (*New Life*) was a Social-Democratic daily issued in Petrograd from April 1917 to July 1918, and simultaneously in Moscow from 1 June 1918. Gorky and Sukhanov were the most prominent of the editors. It took its own rather idiosyncratic political position before October 1917, opposing both the Provisional Government and the Bolsheviks. It provided the forum on 18 October 1917 for Kamenev and Zinoviev to express publicly their (later fateful) opposition to an immediate armed insurrection. Those grouped around this newspaper were dubbed the *Novozhiznentsy* at the time. See also **Gorky**.

Novyi mir (*New World*) was a weekly workers' newspaper that published in New York from 1911 to 1917. It was produced by a New York group in support of the RSDRP, and included on its editorial board L. Deich and S. Ingerman. By the end of 1916, it was in the hands of Trotsky and several Bolsheviks.

Ob"edinenttsy. See **Unifiers**.

Old Bolsheviks was initially an informal term used to refer to those individuals who joined the Bolshevik Party long before the 1917 revolutions. After the party went through enormous membership changes, particularly as a result of the Civil War and again through a series of Lenin Levies during the early 1920s, it bore little resemblance to the party that Lenin had formed in 1903 and beyond. The Old Bolsheviks, numbering in the tens of thousands in 1922, enjoyed considerable prestige. From 1922 to 1935, a Society of Old Bolsheviks (*Obshchestvo starykh bol'shevikov*, or OSB), with about two thousand members at its peak, existed in order to educate the younger generation in the revolutionary tradition and to gather materials on the history of the October Revolution and the party. Deemed a political threat by Stalin, many Old Bolsheviks were removed from power during the Great Purges of the 1930s. Many were executed for treason, many more were sent to the gulag system. See also **Istpart**; **Lenin Levy**; **Show Trials**.

Mikhail Stepanovich **Ol'minskii**, born Aleksandrov (1863–1933), was an Old Bolshevik whose revolutionary career began in the populist Union of Youth (*Soiuz Molodezhi*) in 1884. He experienced various periods of arrest and exile for his populist activities. He joined the Social Democrats while in exile, and became a long-distance follower of Lenin. In exile in Switzerland, he worked under Lenin on the editorial boards of *Vpered* and *Proletarii*. Between 1905 and 1917, he continued his revolutionary publicist activities in other Bolshevik journals and newspapers. He took an active part in the October Revolution. He was a professor at the Socialist (later Communist) Academy from 1918. He was organiser and chair of the history-writing project, **Istpart**, from 1920, and chair of the Society of Old Bolsheviks (*Obshchestvo Starykh Bol'shevikov*) from 1922 to 1931. He was on the board of the Lenin Institute from 1928. He is interred in the Kremlin Wall. See also **Institute of Lenin**; **Istpart**; **Old Bolsheviks**; **Populism**.

Opposition (*Oppozitsiia*) became a catchall term in the 1920s in Soviet Russia for any kind of deviation from political orthodoxy, although the nature of that political orthodoxy itself was still in flux. As such, by the mid-1920s it came to serve more as a political obloquy than a simple description of a movement per se. The Left Communists (*Levyie Kommunisty*) saw themselves to the left of Lenin at key junctures in Russia's revolutionary development and began as a faction in the RKP(b) in 1918. Fearful that the Bolshevik leaders would compromise on key revolutionary goals in the name of short-term com-

promise, the Left Communists, including Bukharin and Bubnov, sought to pressure the RKP(b) on issues such as the need for a revolutionary war against the Central Powers, for full nationalisation of the means of production, and to be against the policy of national self-determination, and so on. The Democratic Centralists (*Gruppa 'demokraticheskogo tsentralizma'* or *Demokraticheskie tsentralisty*) formed in 1920 from the remnants of the Left Communists, and, like the Workers' Opposition (*Rabochaia Oppozitsiia*) including Kollontai and Shlyapnikov, were inspired by growing worker discontent in late 1920 and early 1921 to argue for trade-union control of industry. Despite condemnation at the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921, the Workers' Opposition continued their fight. Below the level of the leaders, small groupings like the Workers' Group of the RKP (*Rabochaia gruppa RKP*) and Workers' Truth (*Gruppa 'Rabochei Pravdy'*) formed of those who agitated for broader democracy within the party. The New Opposition (*Novaia Oppozitsiia*) referred to Kamenev's and Zinoviev's opposition to Stalin in 1925 and 1926, after he had defeated Trotsky in the 'literary discussion' and moved against his former allies. See also **Left Deviations**; **Show Trials**; **Trotsky**.

Grigorii Konstantinovich ('Sergo') **Ordzhonikidze** (1886–1937), a Georgian, became a Bolshevik in 1903 and was active in the Georgian revolutionary movement. He was arrested several times. He took an active part in the October Revolution and the Civil War, and joined forces with Stalin in 1922 to force Georgia into the Soviet Union. He was a full member of the Politburo from 1930–7, and People's Commissar for Heavy Industry (*Narkom tiazheloi promyshlennosti*) from 1932. He was one of the chief organisers of the rapid industrialisation of the USSR during the first two five-year plans. Historians disagree about whether he sought to mitigate the worst excesses of the purges in the 1930s and provide a bulwark against the NKVD, or whether he was indeed fully behind them. The cause of his death in 1937 is unclear. Later rumours about his suicide were also accompanied by rumours that Stalin had ordered his death. His close relatives fell victim to the purges in subsequent years. See also **Stalin**.

Friedrich Wilhelm **Ostwald** (1853–1932) was a Baltic German chemist who received the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1909. He had broad scientific and philosophical interests, adopting the philosophy of monism and becoming President of the Monistic Alliance in 1911, through which he promoted Social Darwinism, eugenics, and euthanasia.

Osvobozhdenie (*Liberation*) was an illegal biweekly journal published in Stuttgart and later in Paris between 1902 and 1905 and edited by P.B. Struve. It was founded by a group of zemstvo liberals, and agitated against revolution and proletarian interests. See also **Bernstein**; **Struve**.

Otzovisty (Recallists). See **Left Deviations**.

The **Pandects** refers to a compendium of Roman law compiled on the order of Emperor Justinian I in 6th century AD.

The **Paris Commune** of 1871 briefly ruled Paris from 18 March to 28 May 1871. It resulted from a working-class uprising in Paris after France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War. Although the short-lived city commune was soon crushed by government forces, it became famous for the radical socialist reforms it espoused. In the context of the 'literary discussion', it stands as an example of a popular uprising that failed because it lacked a strong leading party (on the model of the Bolshevik Party in Russia). The new Soviet Russian government found the Paris Commune a more useable revolutionary example from the past than the more complex and ambiguous lessons of the French Revolution. See also **Blanqui**.

Izrail' Lazarevich **Parvus**, born Alexander Helphand (1869–1924), was an active participant in Russian and German Social Democracy from the late 1890s. Born in Belarussia, he emigrated to Switzerland in 1886. He was highly critical of Bernstein's revisionism. He was a Menshevik from 1903, although he diverged from them before the 1905 Revolution, collaborating with Trotsky on the theory of 'permanent revolution'. As one of the leaders of the Petrograd Soviet in 1905, he was arrested and exiled to Siberia. From 1914–15 he lived in Germany. He was a prominent figure in the Second International. He was one of the sponsors of Lenin's return to Petrograd in the sealed train. In the 'literary discussion', his name was most frequently invoked as an opportunistic 'speculator' in revolutionary matters, and as either the co-originator of the 'errant' theory of permanent revolution, or as its real originator from whom Trotsky 'appropriated' it. See also **Bernstein**; **Permanent Revolution**; **Russian Social Democracy**; **Second International**; **Trotsky**.

Patroclus. See **Achilles**.

Augustin Alfred Joseph **Paul-Boncour** (1873–1972) was a French politician. He became a socialist after the First World War, joining the French Section of the Workers' International (SFIO). He quit the SFIO in 1931 to join the Republican-Socialist Party (PRS). After a six-week stint as Prime Minister of France in December 1932 and January 1933, he became Permanent Delegate to the League of Nations from 1932–1936. He opposed the Nazis and the Vichy government during the war, and was involved in the political restoration of France after the war.

Pechat' i revoliutsiia (*Print and Revolution*) was a Soviet journal of literature, art, criticism and bibliography that published from 1921–30.

N. Pen'kov. I am unable to find information on this individual.

Permanentchiki. See **Permanent Revolution**.

Permanent Revolution (*permanentnaia revoliutsiia*) is a Marxist term that has become associated with Trotsky and Parvus since 1904 and was developed in Trotsky's book 1905. Trotsky argued that given Russia's still 'backward' development, the 'two-stage' theory of revolutionary development – a bourgeois stage followed by a socialist stage – would prove the undoing of any revolution because the bourgeoisie would inevitably betray the revolution for its own self-interest. A 'permanent revolution' was therefore needed in which the proletariat and the poor peasantry would sweep through this stage and take power directly. Trotsky was convinced that an isolated proletarian revolution would be crushed by hostile European bourgeois and imperial states, and he saw 'permanent revolution' as a way of sparking uprisings in other states all across Europe. This directly contradicted Stalin's idea of building 'Socialism in One Country' first. The 'permanent revolution' featured prominently in the 'literary discussion' in late 1924, not as a debated concept but as a cudgel with which to beat Trotsky. The term was treated with dismissiveness by many of the participants in the 'literary discussion'. Molotov and others used the dismissive term *permanentchiki* to refer to its adherents in the party. It was an example of the reductive politicisation of such terms at the time. See also **Parvus**; **Trotsky**.

Aleksei Vasil'evich **Peshekhonov** (1867–1933) was a Russian economist, publicist, and zemstvo statistician. After the February Revolution of 1917, he joined the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet, and participated in negotiations with the Provisional Government to work out conditions for Soviet delegates to join the government. He supported government regulation of the economy, and served as Minister of Food Supplies (*Ministr prodovol'stviia*) in the Provisional Government. After the October Revolution, he joined the anti-Bolshevik, leftist organisation, the Union for the Rebirth of Russia (*Soiuz vrozozhdeniia Rossii*), and represented it in Denikin's Volunteer Army. He was exiled abroad in 1922, and lived in Riga, Prague, and Berlin. He was permitted to return to Soviet Russia in 1927, and worked in a Soviet trade mission in the Baltics. See also **Provisional Government**.

The **Peter and Paul Fortress** (*Petropavlovskaiia krepost'*), located across the Neva opposite the Winter Palace, was founded by Peter the Great in 1703. It very soon became a prison for the deans of Russia's radical and revolutionary movements, including Nikolai Chernyshevsky, Peter Kropotkin, Mikhail Bakunin, and Leon Trotsky. Successive generations of Russian revolutionaries would attempt to transform it into Russia's 'Bastille', a symbol of despotism and tyranny. The prisoners were freed during the February Revolu-

tion of 1917, and, under the Provisional Government, it became a new prison for tsarist officials. Under the Bolshevik Government, the ministers of the Provisional Government were imprisoned there. See also **Finland Station**; **Mariinskii Palace**; **Smolny, Winter Palace**.

The **Petrograd Military District** (*Petrogradskii voennyi okrug*) of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army (РККА) grew out of the Petersburg Military District (*Peterburgskii voennyi okrug*) which had been formed in 1864. It was formed on 20 March 1918 as part of the order to establish the Red Army, and covered the Leningrad, Pskov, Olonets, and Cherepovets provinces. It was renamed the Leningrad Military District on 1 February 1924.

Georgii Leonidovich **Piatakov** (1890–1937) joined the Bolshevik Party in 1910, and fought for Soviet power in the Ukraine, helping to create the Communist Party (bolshevik) of the Ukraine. In the 1920s, he was involved in heavy industry in the Donbass region, and became deputy chair of Gosplan from 1922. From 1927, he was Soviet trade representative to France. He was arrested in September 1936, tried in the show trial of the 'Parallel Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Centre' in January 1937, and shot. He was rehabilitated in 1988. See also **Show Trials**.

Sergei Andreevich **Piontkovskii** (1891–1937) was a Soviet historian who joined the revolutionary movement in 1912 as a Social Democrat. He was active in Ufa and Kazan', and joined the RKP(b) in September 1918. He was active in Istpart and the Communist Academy (*Kommunisticheskaiia Akademiia*), and authored many books on the Revolution and the Civil War. He was arrested in October 1936 and charged with belonging to the 'Counter-revolutionary Trotskyist-Zinovievite Terrorist Organisation'. He was shot, and rehabilitated in 1956. See also **Istpart**; **Show Trials**.

Georgii Valentinovich **Plekhanov** (1856–1918) was one of the founders of the RSDRP. Initially a populist, he embraced Marxism in the 1880s, founding the Marxist Liberation of Labour (*Osvobozhdenie truda*) group. He spent over half of his life in exile, writing some of the seminal theoretical texts of Russian Marxism. In 1900, he was a co-founder of the Marxist *Iskra* group. Together with Lenin, he formulated the programme adopted at the Second Congress of the RSDRP in 1903, although he drew closer to the Mensheviks after the split at the congress. While nonetheless close to the Bolsheviks on many issues before the war, he supported the Russian war effort, for which he was accused of defencism. He returned to Russia from his long exile to some acclaim after the February Revolution. In 1917, he supported the Provisional Government, and actively opposed Bolshevik actions, notably Lenin's April Theses, expounding on his ideas in his newspaper *Edinstvo* (*Unity*). He opposed the October Revolution, believing that Russia

was not ready for a socialist revolution. He died in May 1918. The term 'Plekhanovite', used in the 'literary discussion', is one of a litany of political insults intended to convey adherence to wrong-headed theoretical views. See also **Bernstein**; **Defensism**; **Iskra**; **Populism**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

Viacheslav Konstantinovich **Pleve** (1846–1904) was an extreme right-wing Russian statesman under Tsar Nicholas II. He was chief of the gendarmerie and Governor General of Finland, and an extremely unpopular Minister of the Interior. He was an ardent Russifier of national minorities and an implacable foe of the revolutionary movement. He was assassinated by Egor Sozonov, a member of the Fighting Organisation of the SR party, allegedly for fostering the atmosphere for the Jewish pogroms in Kishinev in April 1903. See also **Black Hundreds**; **Purishkevich**; **Socialist Revolutionary Party**.

Nikolai Il'ich **Podvoiskii** (1880–1948) joined the RSDRP in 1901, and gravitated to the Bolsheviks after the 1903 split. In 1905, he helped organise strikes in Ivanovo-Voznesensk. He emigrated in 1906, but soon returned to Russia to conduct illegal revolutionary activities. In 1917, he was active in the military organisation of the Bolshevik Party and helped establish the Red Guards. He was very active in the October Revolution as chair of the Military Revolutionary Committee. From November 1917 to March 1918, he was People's Commissar for Military Affairs of the RSFSR (*Narodnyi kommissar po voennym delam RSFSR*). He later helped organise the Red Army. He was active in Ispart in the 1920s. See also **Ispart**; **Military Revolutionary Committee**.

Raymond **Poincaré** (1860–1934) was a moderate deputy in the French Third Republic, serving as Prime Minister in 1912, President in 1913, and Prime Minister again from 1922–4 and 1926–9. He was known for his hard line against Germany and his constant warnings about Germany's militarist aspirations.

A ***pomeshchik*** was a noble landowner or squire in pre-revolutionary Russia.

Populism (*Narodnichestvo*) was the movement of Russian populist socialists (*Narodniki*) that disputed the Marxist contention that Russia had to pass through the capitalist stage of historical development. The populists wagered on the peasant commune as an embryonic form of communism. They advocated the abolition of the autocracy, the introduction of agrarian reforms, and a socialist society based on the commune. Through agitational and publicistic activities, and later through terrorism, the Populists sought to incite the peasantry against tsarism. From about 1860 to 1895, a succession of organisations articulated Populist ideals: Land and Freedom (*Zemlia i Volia*), People's Vengeance (*Narodnaia rasprava*), Black Repartition (*Chernyi peredel*), People's Will (*Narodnaia volia*), among others. People's Will emerged in 1879 as a result of a

split in Land and Freedom, and assassinated Tsar Alexander II in St. Petersburg on 1 March 1881. Government reprisals and a general decline in its popularity undercut the movement, although other groups like the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries (PSR), the Popular Socialists, and the Trudoviks all espoused similar ideas as the Populists. See also **Socialist Revolutionary Party**.

Aleksandr Nikolaevich **Potresov** (1869–1934) was a Social Democrat who helped found the St. Petersburg Union of Struggle for the Liberation of Labour (*Soiuz Bor'by za Osvobozhdenie Truda*). His socialist activities brought him arrest and exile from 1900–5. He was a co-founder of *Iskra* in 1903. After the 1905 Revolution, he was leader of the right wing of Menshevism, adopting a defencist stance during the First World War. He fiercely opposed the October Revolution as the end of democracy. In September 1918, he quit the RSDRP, joining the anti-Bolshevik organisation Union of Rebirth of Russia (*Soiuz vozrozhdeniia Rossii*), which drew in Kadets, Right SRs, and Popular Socialists (*Narodnye Sotsialisty*). He was arrested by the Cheka for his participation in the Union. Intervention by prominent Bolsheviks led to his release, and he engaged in teaching work until his emigration in 1925 first to Berlin, later to Paris. Although very ill in the emigration, he kept up a sustained critique of the October Revolution and the Bolsheviks. See also **Defencism**; *Iskra*; **Russian Social Democracy**; *Sotsialisticheskii vestnik*.

Prague Conference. See **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**.

Pravda (*Truth*) was the organ of the Bolshevik Central Committee. This daily newspaper was founded on 5 May 1912, and was responsible for publicising Marxist and revolutionary issues, and documenting the tribulations of Russia's working classes. Repeatedly suppressed by the tsarist police, it was formally banned from July 1914 to March 1917, when it briefly reappeared during the Provisional Government era, only to be banned again after the July Days. It appeared under a number of different names because of police repression, including *Rabochaia pravda* (*Workers' Truth*), *Severnaia pravda* (*Northern Truth*), *Pravda trudy* (*Labour's Truth*), *Za pravdy* (*For Truth*), *Proletarskaia pravda* (*Proletarian Truth*), *Put' pravdy* (*The Way of Truth*), *Rabochii* (*The Worker*), *Trudovaia pravda* (*Labour's Truth*), *Rabochii put'* (*Workers' Path*). It reverted to the name *Pravda* for good from 30 October. Stalin was associated with the paper from its earliest days. It, along with the newspaper *Izvestiia*, provided the major forum for the 'literary discussion' around Trotsky's work. The term 'Pravdaists' (*Pravdisty*), referring to those activists who worked on the paper, was applied to convey a certain clear-sightedness and fortitude in adopting 'correct' political positions often at difficult times. See also the **Vienna Pravda**.

Pravdaists. See *Pravda*.

Pre-parliament. See **Democratic Conference**.

Sergei Nikolaevich **Prokopovich** (1871–1955) was a Russian Marxist economist and sociologist who came under the influence of Bernstein and other ‘revisionist’ Social Democrats. He was criticised as an Economist or a Bernsteinian revisionist. He left the RSDRP in 1899, and by 1904 was helping to organise the Union of Liberation (*Soiuz Osvobozhdeniia*) group and co-founded the liberal newspaper *Nasha zhizn'* (*Our Life*). He welcomed the February Revolution in 1917 and rejoined the Menshevik wing of Russian Social Democracy. He served in Kerensky's Provisional Government as Minister of Trade and Industry (*Ministr Torgovli i Promyshlennosti*). He was arrested by the Bolsheviks on 25 October 1917, but was quickly released. He was expelled from Soviet Russia in 1922 and continued his publicistic works in the emigration. He moved to Switzerland in 1939, and died there in 1955. See also **Bernstein**.

Proletarskaia revoliutsiia. See **Istpart**.

Prosveshchenie (*Enlightenment*) was a legal Bolshevik monthly that was published in St. Petersburg from December 1911 to June 1914. Lenin founded it from the emigration as a replacement for the journal *Mysl'* (*Thought*) that had been banned by the tsarist authorities. It was intended to lead the fight against liquidationists, recallists, social chauvinists, and so on. It was subjected to repeated harassments and closures by the authorities. See also **Left Deviations**.

The **Provisional Government** (*Vremennoe pravitel'stvo*) was formed by the Provisional Committee of the State Duma on 2 March 1917, after Tsar Nicholas II had abdicated. It was led by Prince Georgii Lvov, and included a range of liberal leading lights, including the leader of the Kadets, Miliukov; the leader of the Octobrists, Guchkov; and the socialist jurist, Kerensky, among others. This Provisional Government considered itself a placeholder until a Constituent Assembly could be convened. The Provisional Government was hamstrung by its deferral of pressing problems until the Assembly met, and by the situation of ‘Dual Power’ it ‘shared’ with the Petrograd Soviet. Successive crises led to its downfall, and replacement by a second coalition Provisional Government in July, led by Kerensky. The demise of this second coalition government was hastened by the Kornilov debacle, and a third coalition government, again headed by Kerensky, was formed on 25 September. This final coalition included ten socialist and six non-socialist ministers, the change in composition a sharp measure of the shift in political mood in the capital in the course of 1917. The Provisional Government was eventually toppled by the Bolsheviks on 25 October 1917. See also **Constituent Assembly**; **Dual Power**; **Kerensky**; **Kornilov Affair**; **Lvov**.

PSR. See **Socialist Revolutionary Party.**

Vladimir Mitrofanovich **Purishkevich** (1870–1920) was an extreme right, monarchist leader, prominent in the rightist factions in the Second, Third, and Fourth Dumas. He founded the anti-semitic Union of the Russian People (*Soiuz Russkogo Naroda*) and head of the Union of Michael the Archangel (*Soiuz Mikhaila Arkhangela*). He famously participated in the assassination of Rasputin in December 1916. He opposed the Provisional Government in 1917 and worked towards an armed monarchist uprising. He was even more unimpressed with the October Revolution, and was arrested in late 1917 charged with counter-revolutionary conspiracy. He was amnestied and went to the South of Russia to support the White Movement under General Denikin. He died of typhus in Novorossiisk in 1920. See also **Black Hundreds**; **Denikin**; **Duma**; **Markov**.

Rabkrin. See **Worker and Peasant Inspectorate.**

Rabochaia gazeta (*Workers' Newspaper*) was the central organ of the RSDRP and published daily from 7 March–17 November 1917. It was closed by the MRC on 18 November 1917. Thereafter it appeared from 19 November 1917 until March 1918 under various guises, including *Luch* (*Beam*), *Zaria* (*Dawn*), *Klich* (*Clarion*), *Plamia* (*Flame*), *Fakel* (*Torch*), *Molniiia* (*Lightning*), *Molot* (*Hammer*), *Shchit* (*Shield*), *Novyi luch* (*New Beam*). It was edited at various times by prominent Social Democrats, including Garvi, Dan, and Martov. See also **Russian Social Democracy**.

Rabochaia pravda. See ***Pravda.***

Rabochii put'. See ***Pravda.***

The Ukrainian ***Rada*** (Council) was the name used by the Ukrainian revolutionary government between March 1917 and April 1918, and was founded in Kiev at the behest of the Society of Ukrainian Progectionists and with the co-operation of various Ukrainian political parties. It declared its support for the Russian Provisional Government. It was the active center of Ukrainian nationalism and independence at this time.

Karl Berngardovich **Radek** (born Sobelsohn) (1885–1939) was a militant Polish Social Democrat, later a German militant. He engaged in some very public disagreements with Lenin on issues of national self-determination, among other issues. He joined the Bolshevik Party, was sent to Sweden in 1917 and to Germany in 1918, where he was arrested for revolutionary activities. After 1921, he lived in Moscow and was secretary of the Comintern. In June 1923, he gave a controversial speech to the Comintern known as the 'Schlageter speech' ('Leo Schlageter: The Wanderer into the Void'). In this

speech, Radek praised the German Freikorps officer Leo Schlageter, who had been shot while engaging in sabotage against French troops occupying the Ruhr, for his albeit misguided devotion to the German people. Radek was attempting to explain why such men were drawn to the far right, and why they ended up supporting those classes which had caused Germany's demise. Radek was suggesting ways that the grievances of such men might be channelled into the service of the workers and the communists instead. Radek was a member of the Left Opposition that was expelled from the party in 1927, and vilified as a Trotskyist. He was deported in 1928, but recanted his Trotskyism in 1929 and was readmitted to the RKP(b). He was arrested in 1936 and was one of the accused in the second Moscow show trial in 1937. He died in prison. See also **Comintern; Opposition; Show Trials**.

The **Reaction** (*Reaktsiia*) refers to the period after the defeat of the 1905 Revolution, and especially after the 1907 Stolypin 'coup d'état'. Revolutionary organisations underwent severe repression, many local committees were crushed and forced underground, and their leaders fled into the emigration. Isaac Deutscher famously referred to this period as 'the doldrums' in his biography of Trotsky. It came to signify a period of retreat and retrenchment until more propitious circumstances allowed for a revival of the revolutionary movement in Russia.

Recallists (*Otzovisty*). See **Left Deviations**.

John Reed (1887–1920) was an American journalist and war correspondent sent in 1913 to cover the Mexican Revolution, and in 1917 to cover the Russian Revolution. He also wrote fierce articles against the First World War, and was disappointed by what he believed it was doing to working-class solidarity. Reed was pivotal in the creation of the Communist Labour Party in 1919, which, together with the Communist Party of America, emerged from the left wing of the Socialist Party of America (SPA) after their convention in Chicago in August. After the October Revolution in Russia, Reed worked in the Communist Department of International Revolutionary Propaganda there, an assignment that brought him into close contact with the major movers of the new Soviet socialist regime. His memoir of the revolution, *Ten Days That Shook the World*, was published in 1919 to acclaim and criticism in equal doses. It soon appeared with a laudatory introduction by Lenin. Stalin was less praising of the work, particularly the relative weight assigned to certain historical actors, notably himself and Trotsky, in its treatment of the October insurrection. It was banned in the Soviet Union, only to be republished after Stalin's death. Reed died from typhus in 1920, and is one of the few foreigners interred in the Kremlin Wall. See also **Comintern; Eastman; Shachtman**.

Hermann **Remmele** (1880–1939) was a German socialist politician who first joined the SPD, then co-founded the USPD in 1917. He was on the Worker and Soldier Council in Mannheim during the German revolution of 1918–19, and was one of the initiators of the Soviet Republic in Mannheim in February 1919. He joined the KPD in 1920, along with other USPD members, was on its Central Committee until 1933, and was a Reichstag deputy for the party throughout that period. He also edited the party newspaper, *Die rote Fahne* (*The Red Banner*). From 1926, Remmele was on the ECCI of the Comintern. With Hitler's rise to power, he moved to Moscow, but lost his party and Comintern positions after factional disagreements within the KPD. His self-criticism was published in the communist press in January 1934. In 1937, Remmele was arrested, together with his family, during the Stalinist purges and sentenced to death and shot in March 1939. See also **Comintern**; **Communist Party of Germany**; **German Revolution of 1918–19**.

Pierre **Renaudel** (1871–1935) was an editor of *L'Humanité* (*Humanity*) during the First World War. He was a member of the Neo-Socialist faction inside the French Section of the Workers' International (SFIO), and was expelled from the SFIO in 1933 for his revisionist positions. He supported alliances with the bourgeoisie, and advocated gradualist enactment of the SFIO programme and socialist participation in bourgeois governments. After his expulsion, he co-founded the Socialist Party of France – League of Jean Jaurès (*Parti socialiste de France-Union Jean Jaurès*).

Revolutionary Defeatism (*revoliutsionnoe porazhenchestvo*) referred to the stance adopted by Lenin and his followers during the First World War, whereby the defeat of Russia in the war was regarded as a desirable catalyst for future world revolution. At the Zimmerwald Conference in 1915, Lenin argued that in such an imperialist war, from which only the capitalists could benefit, the working masses would gain more from their own nations' defeat if the war could be transformed into civil war and revolution. See also **Defencism**; **Revolutionary Defencism**; **Kienthal Conference**; **Zimmerwald Conference**.

Revolutionary Defencism (*revoliutsionnoe oboronchestvo*) was an influential political strategy that arose after the February Revolution of 1917, and was championed by the Georgian Menshevik Irakli Tsereteli and his group of Siberian Zimmerwaldists. This strategy called on all Russian socialists to support the defence of the country and the policies of the Provisional Government, essentially deferring socialist revolution in the interest of a broad centrist coalition of moderate socialists and liberal conservatives. See also **Defencism**; **Revolutionary Defeatism**; **Zimmerwald Conference**.

The **Revolutionary Military Council** (*Revoliutsionnyi voennyi sovet* or *Revvoensovet*) was the supreme administrative and political leadership of the Red Army from 1918 to

1934. It was set up in 1918 by a decree centralising the strategic and military command of the new state. Its first chairman was Trotsky from 1918 until his removal from the post in January 1925 in the wake of the 'literary discussion'. It was dissolved in 1934.

David Borisovich **Riazanov**, born Gol'dendakh (1870–1938), was a Marxist theoretician and active revolutionary since 1887 in Odessa. He represented the group *Struggle* (*Bor'ba*) at the Second Congress of the RSDRP in 1903. He remained above the factions that emerged in the 1903 split in the RSDRP. He was a trade-union activist, and became a close collaborator of Trotsky in Vienna in the prewar period. He returned to Russia in April 1917, and joined the *mezhraiontsy*, a group that merged with the Bolsheviks in August. He was deeply opposed to the NEP, and hostile to Stalin and to the role of the party in the trade-union movement. In 1921, he founded the Marx-Engels Institute (*Institut Marksa i Engel'sa*), which he headed until 1931. For his work in support of several oppositionists, including the now exiled Trotsky, he was accused of having Menshevik associations, and was arrested in February 1931 and expelled from the party. He was exiled to Saratov, where he continued to work as an academic. He was re-arrested in July 1937, and shot in January 1938. He was rehabilitated in 1958, and restored to the party in 1989. See also *Mezhraiontsy*; **Russian Social Democracy**; **Vienna Pravda**.

RLKSM. See **Komsomol**.

Mikhail Vladimirovich **Rodzianko** (1859–1924) was a right-wing Russian statesman who led the Octobrists ('Union of October 17', *Soiuz 17 Oktiabria*), and was president of the Third and Fourth Dumas. He supported the tsarist government's territorial ambitions during the First World War. After the February Revolution, he helped approve the Provisional Government, in his capacity as head of the Provisional Committee of the Duma. After the October Revolution, he joined Denikin's Volunteer Army against the Bolsheviks in the Don region of the country. After defeat in the Civil War, he emigrated to Yugoslavia and died there in 1924. See also **Denikin**; **Duma**; **Provisional Government**.

N. Rovenskaia was one of a group of special assistants to Trotsky who helped organise and edit Trotsky's writings in the early 1920s. See also **Geller**; **Glazman**; **Kryzhanovskii**; **Lentsner**; **Rumer**.

RSDRP. See **Russian Social Democracy**.

RSDRP(b). See **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**.

RSDRP Internationalists. See **Mensheviks**.

I. Rumer was one of a group of special assistants to Trotsky who helped organise and edit Trotsky's writings in the early 1920s. See also **Geller**; **Glazman**; **Kryzhanovskii**; **Lentsner**; **Rovenskaia**.

The **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)** (*Rossiiskaia Kommunisticheskaia partiia (bol'shevikov)* or РКП(б)) was the party of the Bolsheviks ('Majority group'), led by Lenin. It started as a discrete group at the Second Congress of the RSDRP in Brussels and London in 1903, after the split into Bolshevik and Menshevik factions over the issue of the future organisation of the party. Lenin argued that the RSDRP should be an elite, centralised band of professional revolutionaries, while his opponents (later dubbed the 'Mensheviks' or 'Minority Group') wanted a more open membership policy on the model of the mass Social-Democratic parties of Western Europe. Lenin had argued for his model of the party in a famous treatise of 1902, *What Is To Be Done?* Notwithstanding repeated efforts by many moderate opponents to reunify the party, Lenin consolidated the Bolshevik Party as the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (bolshevik) in Prague in January 1912, convening his small conference of supporters as the Sixth (Prague) All-Russia Conference of the RSDRP. His personal role in forging this new entity should not be underestimated. The Seventh All-Russian (April) Conference of the RSDRP(б) took place from 24–29 April 1917 in Petrograd, and was attended by 133 voting delegates representing some 78 party organisations. It was at this conference that the party finally supported Lenin's call in his April Theses to press for socialist revolution. The conference took up the slogan 'All Power to the Soviets' and identified the immediate task of the party as one of strengthening and broadening Bolshevik influence in the Soviets. The Sixth Congress of the RSDRP(б) took place from 26 July–3 August 1917 in Petrograd, while Lenin was in hiding after the July Days. The delegates agreed on a seizure of power in Russia in theory, although they did not act on it. The congress also saw the merger of the *mezhraiontsy* (about four thousand members, including Trotsky) with the Bolsheviks. The Bolsheviks were instrumental in bringing about the October insurrection of 1917 through sustained agitation among worker groups and through the actual organisation of the October events. At the Seventh Extraordinary Congress from 6–8 March 1918 in Petrograd, the RSDRP(б) renamed itself the Russian Communist Party. The Mensheviks mounted opposition to the Bolsheviks at the local level in Russia for a while, but most potently from their position of forced emigration through their newspaper *Sotsialisticheskii Vestnik* (*Socialist Courier*). The Tenth Congress met in Moscow from 8–16 March 1921, and was notable for its decision to adopt the New Economic Policy (NEP) and the ban on internal factions. The Thirteenth Party Conference convened from 16–18 January 1924 in Moscow and launched what became known as the Lenin Levy, the recruitment of thousands of workers into

the party. The Thirteenth Congress met in Moscow from 23–31 May 1924 and was notable for its first confrontation between the Left Opposition led by Trotsky and the ‘troika’ of Stalin, Zinoviev, and Kamenev. The Congress unanimously condemned Trotsky’s position, denouncing it as a petty-bourgeois deviation from Marxism and a revision of Leninism. At the Fourteenth Congress from 18–31 December 1925, the РКР(b) renamed itself the All-Union Communist Party (bolshevik) (*Vsesoiuznaia Kommunisticheskaia Partiiia (bol'shevikov)*, ВКР(b)). The Nineteenth Congress from 5–14 October 1952 saw the final name-change, as the ВКР became the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (*Kommunisticheskaia Partiiia Sovetskogo Soiuza*, or КПСС). See also **Comintern**; **Lenin Levy**; **Mezhraiontsy**; **Mensheviks**; **Opposition**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

Russian Social Democracy was an outgrowth of the broad nineteenth-century movement of Social Democracy in Europe that produced such large and successful organisations of socialists as the Social Democratic Party of Germany (*Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands*, SPD). Although not the first Russian Marxist group, the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (*Rossiiskaia Sotsial-Demokraticheskaia Rabochaia Partiiia*, RSDRP) was founded at its First Congress in Minsk from 13–15 March 1898 in opposition to Populism and in support of socialist goals. The RSDRP wagered on the revolutionary potential of the rising working classes in Russia, despite the overwhelmingly agrarian nature of the country. At the Second Congress, which took place first in Brussels and later in London between 17 July and 10 August 1903, the party split into two irreconcilable factions, the Bolsheviks led by Lenin, and the Mensheviks led by Martov. Lenin had wanted to restrict party membership to only the most dedicated, professional, full-time revolutionaries, while Martov, and others, wanted a more open membership policy on the model of the grand European Social-Democratic parties. The lines hardened only further with time, as subsequent Congresses revealed: the Third Congress from 12–27 April 1905 was held by the Bolsheviks only; the Fourth (Unity) Congress from 10–25 April 1906 saw a shaky, Menshevik-dominated reunification; the Fifth Congress from 30 April–19 May 1907 in London saw the rise of the Bolsheviks again. The less disciplined and more amorphous elements of moderate Social Democracy in Russia were unable to organise themselves as efficiently, despite various efforts. When Lenin constituted the party at a conference from 5–17 January 1912 in Prague as the Russian Social Democratic Labour Party (bolshevik) or RSDRP(b), the die was cast, notwithstanding subsequent fruitless efforts to reunite the party. In August 1912, with Trotsky’s often tepid involvement, moderate Social Democrats came together in Vienna to create an ‘August Bloc’ as the groundwork for future reunification, although they lacked the Bolsheviks’ single-mindedness. See also **Comintern**; **Mensheviks**; **Opposition**; **Populism**; **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**; **Second International**.

Russkoe slovo (*The Russian Word*) was a daily newspaper that published in Moscow from 1895 to 1918, printing social, political and theatre news. It supported the Provisional Government after the February Revolution in 1917. It opposed the October Revolution. It persisted for a few months after that, but was closed down in July 1918.

rvs. See **Revolutionary Military Council**.

Aleksei Ivanovich **Rykov** (1881–1938) was an Old Bolshevik who first became involved in Social-Democratic activities in Kazan' and Saratov, underwent periodic arrest and exile, and joined the RSDRP(b) in 1907. After a peripatetic life of exile and prison, he arrived in Moscow in April 1917 and became Deputy Chair of the Moscow Soviet. Later that year, he moved to Petrograd and joined the Soviet. After the October Revolution, he served for nine days as People's Commissar for Internal Affairs (*Narodnyi kommissar vnutrennykh del*) in the first Soviet government, transferring to the Moscow Soviet. He chaired the All-Russian Council on the National Economy (VSNKh RSFSR) from April 1918 to May 1921, and was deputy chair of Sovnarkom. He was on the Organisational Bureau (Orgbiuro) from 1920 to 1924 and in the Politburo from 1922. In early 1924, he became chair of the Sovnarkom SSSR. At the time of the 'literary discussion', he was one of the powerful '*semerka*' (The Seven) that made up the Politburo. He took Stalin's side in the fight against Trotsky after Lenin's death. In the late 1920s, he became part of the so-called 'right deviation' in the party opposing the end of NEP and the switch to forced collectivisation and rapid industrialisation. He lost his chair of Sovnarkom and his place in the Politburo in December 1930, and became the People's Commissar of Post and Telegraph from 1932 to 1936. He was expelled from the party and arrested in early 1937. He confessed at a show trial in Moscow in March 1938, and was sentenced to death. He was shot on 15 March 1938, and rehabilitated and restored to the CPSU in 1988. See also **Opposition; Semerka; Show Trials**.

Georgii Ivanovich **Safarov** (1891–1942) was of Armenian-Polish heritage, and took part in Social-Democratic circles in 1905, joining the RSDRP in 1908. He worked for the Bolshevik section in exile in Switzerland during the 'doldrums'. He returned to Russia with Lenin and Zinoviev in the 'sealed train' in 1917. He worked on *Pravda* in 1917. In 1918, he was on the Presidium of the Ural's Regional Committee (*Ural'skii oblastnyi komitet*) of the RKP(b) and edited the local newspaper *Ekaterinburgskii rabochii* (*Ekaterinburg Worker*). As chairman of the regional committee of the party, he was involved in the execution of the Tsarist family while there. He was sent to Turkestan in November 1919, becoming a member of the Turkestan CC RKP(b) and often speaking on the nationalities issue. From 1922 to 1924, he was on the Executive Committee of the Comintern, and head of its Eastern Department (*Vostochnyi otдел*). He supported Zinoviev in the intraparty struggles. In 1927, he was appointed to the Trade Representation of the USSR

(*Torgovoe predstavitel'stvo SSSR*) in Turkey, but refused to go as he regarded this as exile for his support of Zinoviev. In December 1927, he was expelled from the VKP(b), arrested, and sent into exile in Achinsk. He recanted his oppositionist activities and was readmitted to the VKP(b) in 1928, and returned to his position in the Eastern Department of the Comintern. After Kirov's assassination in 1934, he was arrested as part of the Kirov purge, and exiled again in 1935. After several years in the gulag, he was shot on 16 July 1942. He was posthumously restored to the party in 1990, and rehabilitated in 1991. See also **Goloshchekin**; **Opposition**.

The *sarai* (barn) and *shalash* (hut) were two places on the outskirts of Petrograd where Lenin hid out from police persecution by the Provisional Government after the July unrest in 1917. He was first at the *sarai* until, threatened by police discovery, he was moved to the *shalash*. Both sites became iconic pilgrimage sites almost immediately; indeed, the *sarai* was first opened as a museum in 1925. They became major stops on the tour of revolutionary sites visited by faithful Communists and Soviet schoolchildren during the Soviet period. See also **Finland Station**; **Lena massacre**; **Peter and Paul Fortress**; **Sealed Train**; **Smolny**; **Winter Palace**; *Zaria Svobody*.

The **Savage Division** (*Dikaia diviziia*), was formed in 1914 as a cavalry division of the tsarist army, and was made up of volunteers from the Northern Caucasus region. It remained loyal to the Provisional Government in 1917 taking part in the Kornilov uprising in August 1917. It was disbanded in 1918. See also **Kornilov Affair**.

Philipp **Scheidemann** (1865–1939) was a leading German Right Social-Democratic politician. He proclaimed the Weimar Republic on 9 November 1918, and was its second Chancellor. He had served as a Social-Democratic delegate to the Imperial Parliament (Reichstag) in the pre-war period, and during the war voted for war credits, while pushing for peace. He resigned from the government in 1919 over disagreement with the Versailles Treaty. After the Nazi rise to power in 1933, he went into exile and died in the first year of the war. See also **Cuno**; **David**; **German Revolution of 1923**.

'**Schlageter speech**'. See **Radek**.

The '**scissors crisis**' became shorthand for an economic dilemma articulated by Trotsky at the Twelfth Party Congress in 1923. Using a diagram, Trotsky showed the growing gap between the prices of agricultural products and the prices of industrial products over the preceding year, as the blades of the 'scissors' opened up. This rising disparity between industrial and agricultural prices represented a crisis, in Trotsky's view, because it threatened the recovering NEP economy that relied on strong peasant involvement and illustrated the pitfalls of uncontrolled market processes. See also **NEP**.

The **Sealed Train** took Lenin and his comrades from Switzerland back to Russia, through Germany, in April 1917. The German government hoped that they would cause unrest in Russia and thereby end the war on the Eastern Front. In revolutionary lore, the train has iconic status because of Lenin's triumphant arrival in the Finland Station in Petrograd, an episode depicted on a mythic scale in Eisenstein's film, *October*, in 1927. In counter-revolutionary lore, the train came to symbolise Lenin's 'treason' as it was carrying ten million dollars in gold from a German banker to help topple the tsarist government. See *Aurora*; *Finland Station*; *Peter and Paul Fortress*; *Lena massacre*; *Sarai and Shalash*; *Smolny*, *Winter Palace*; *Zaria Svobody*.

The **Second Congress of the RSDRP**. See **Russian Social Democracy**.

The **Second International** began life as an organisation of socialist and labour parties in 1889, and continued the work of the dissolved First International. Its executive body was the International Socialist Bureau (ISB) based in Brussels. It advocated a reformist agenda to improve workers' rights. It was split by the First World War in 1914 as individual parties suppressed their internationalist aspirations in favour of narrower national support for their individual nations' roles in the war. The Zimmerwald Conference in 1915 was the anti-war socialists' effort to oppose what they saw as the 'social patriotism' of these actions. The Second International was resuscitated in 1920, although some European socialist parties refused to rejoin and formed the International Working Union of Socialist Parties (IWUSP, Two and a Half International) instead. Three years later, the Second International and the Two and a Half International merged into the Social Democratic Labour and Socialist International. See also **Comintern**; **Kienthal Conference**; **Zimmerwald Conference**.

The *semerka* (The Seven) referred to a 'secret Politburo' in the party in 1924. In January 1924, after Lenin's death, a small group of Bolsheviks in the Central Committee styled itself as the 'guiding collective' of the party. This collective selected the *semerka* from its ranks, consisting of Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, Stalin, Tomsy, and the chair of the Central Control Commission, V.V. Kuibyshev. The *semerka* apparently preempted major decisions by both the Politburo and the Central Control Commission. See also **Sovnarkom**.

The failed **September Antifascist Uprising** took place from 23–29 September 1923 in Bulgaria, and was undertaken by the Communist Party of Bulgaria (БКР). It was launched in response to the establishment of a military fascist dictatorship on 9 June 1923 that removed from power the Communists' one-time ally Stamboliiskii (1879–1923), head of the Agrarian Party, who had been Premier of Bulgaria since 1920. The right-wing government that took power under Aleksandar Tsankov (1879–1959) on

9 June persecuted Stamboliiskii's Agrarians and the Communists. The leader of the Communists, Dimitrov (1882–1949), fled to Soviet Russia. The Communist uprising was organised by Dimitrov and V. Kolarov, among others, and the uprising led to the arrest by the Tsankov government of some 2,500 Communists and the destruction on 21 September of the organising Military Revolutionary Committee. Several leading Bulgarian Communists, including T. Lukanov, had objected to the uprising. During the uprising, parts of North West and Southern Bulgaria were run by committees of workers and peasants (joined by members of the Agrarian Union). The uprising was brutally suppressed by the Tsankov regime. Those engaged in the 'literary discussion' in Russia saw this uprising as Bulgaria's 1905, and saw its failure as evidence of the need for the city and countryside to work together in the battle for Communism. In 1926, Tsankov resigned and a more moderate government took over, which relaxed persecution of the Agrarians, but continued the ban on the Communists. See also **Agrarian Union**; **Bulgarian Communist Party**; **Finnish Revolution**; **German Revolution of 1918–19**; **German Revolution of 1923**; **Hungarian Revolution**.

Seredniak. See **Kulak**.

Giacinto Menotti **Serrati** (1874–1926) was a leader of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) and a long-time editor of its newspaper, *Avanti*. He was a leftist during the First World War, and participated in the Zimmerwald Movement. After the October Revolution, he took the PSI into the Comintern. At the Livorno Congress of 1920, Serrati supported the reformists, and in 1921, when an Italian Communist Party (PCI) split off, he remained head of the PSI. He began moving further to the left by mid-1922, and at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in 1922 he supported merging the left wing of the PSI with the PCI, which occurred in 1924, and was elected to the PCI's Central Committee. See also **Comintern**; **Terracini**; **Turati**; **Zimmerwald Conference**.

Max **Shachtman** (1904–72) was an American Marxist who in 1921 joined the Communist Workers' Council, a faction of the Socialist Party of America. The Workers' Council merged with the Workers' Party of America. Shachtman was active in Chicago in the 1920s as a Communist youth organiser and publicist. In the late 1920s, he, along with other American Communists, became supporters of Trotsky and were expelled from the party in October 1928 as Stalin took control of the Comintern. He visited Trotsky in exile in 1930 on Pinkipo. He translated and popularised Trotsky's writings and helped found the Trotskyist publishing house, Pioneer Press. He became a leader of the Trotskyist breakaway Socialist Workers' Party (SWP). He broke with Trotsky over the latter's defence of the USSR despite the Soviet role in the non-aggression treaty with Nazi Germany, and the Soviet Winter War in Finland. After Trotsky's death, Shachtman's SWP became active in union battles in America. See also **Reed**.

Aleksandr Gavrilovich **Shlyapnikov** (1883–1937) was a Russian revolutionary since the 1890s. He suffered various arrests, until his emigration in 1908 where he conducted Bolshevik work until his return to Russia in 1916. He was one of the senior Bolsheviks in Russia until Lenin's return in April, and he was active in the Soviets. He became chairman of the Metalworkers' Union (*Soiuz Metallistov*) and first People's Commissar for Labour (*Narodnyi Kommissar Truda*) after the October Revolution. He lost his position because of his leadership of the Workers' Opposition inside the party, in which capacity he argued for trade-union-organised workers to manage the economy. After the suppression of the Workers' Opposition, and the subordination to the party of the trade-union leadership, Shlyapnikov was removed from his posts. These 'factional' activities meant that his position was perilous throughout the 1920s. He was expelled from the party in 1933, and arrested in 1935. He was executed in September 1937. He was rehabilitated and restored to the party in 1988. See also **Left Deviations; Opposition**.

Vasilii Vladimirovich **Shmidt** (1886–1938) joined the RSDRP in 1905, and after the defeat of the 1905 Revolution emigrated to Germany where he spent the next four years. From 1911 to 1914, he was secretary of the Union of Metalworkers (*Soiuz Metallistov*) in St. Petersburg. He was arrested and exiled in 1914. After the February Revolution, he was secretary of the Petrograd Committee of the RSDRP(b) and involved in trade-union matters. In the run-up to October, he was in the Petrograd Military Revolutionary Committee. He served as People's Commissar for Labour of the RSFSR (*Narodnyi Komissar Truda RSFSR*) from 1918–28. He was arrested in January 1937 and was shot on 28 January 1938. He was rehabilitated in 1957. See also **Russian Social Democracy**.

An. **Shokhin**. I am unable to find information on this individual.

Aleksandr Vasil'evich **Shotman** (1880–1937) joined the RSDRP in 1899, and conducted party work in the industrial Vyborg district of St. Petersburg. He was a delegate to the Second Congress of the RSDRP in 1903, immediately joining the Bolshevik faction after the split. His participation in the 1905 Revolution brought him exile and, after his return to the capital, a life in the underground. After the February Revolution, he was a member of the Tomsk committee of the RSDRP(b) and was later sent to Finland, where he had been active before the revolution. After the October Revolution, he was deputy People's Commissar for Post and Telegraph (*Narodnyi komissar pocht i telegrafov*). He spent much of the 1920s working in administrative and economic posts in the Northern Caucasus, in the Karelian region, and on matters relating to Kamchatka and Sakhalin in the Far East. He was arrested in June 1937 accused of participation in an anti-Soviet Trotskyist organisation, and was shot in October 1937. He was rehabilitated in 1955. See also **Russian Social Democracy; Show Trials**.

The **Show Trials** were a series of public trials initiated by the Soviet government, beginning in 1928–9 with the Shakhty Trial when 47 engineers from the Donets Basin were convicted of ‘sabotage’ of the national industrial effort. The three most infamous show trials took place in Moscow between 1936 and 1938 during the period that came to be known as the Great Purges. The first, the trial of the ‘Counter-Revolutionary Trotskyist-Zinovievite Terrorist Centre’, also known as the Trial of the Sixteen, took place in August 1936, and charged 16 defendants, including Zinoviev and Kamenev, with plotting the assassination of the Leningrad party boss, Sergei Kirov, in 1934, and also planning to kill Stalin. The second trial, that of the ‘Anti-Soviet Parallel Trotskyite Centre’, also known as the Trial of the Seventeen, took place in January 1937, and charged 17 defendants, including Radek, Piatakov, and Sokol’nikov, with plotting to overthrow the Soviet government at the instigation of Trotsky. The third show trial, the ‘Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rightists and Trotskyites’, also known as the Trial of the Twenty-One, took place in March 1938, and charged 21 leading Bolsheviks for their alleged association with Trotsky, dating back to, among other moments, the ‘literary discussion’ of 1924. The trial included Bukharin, Rykov, Genrikh Iagoda, Christian Rakovsky, and Nikolai Krestinsky. In these trials, many publicly confessed and recanted, under duress, and were executed. See also **Bukharin; Kamenev; Opposition; Trotsky; Zinoviev**.

Matvei Ivanovich **Skobelev** (1885–1938) joined the Social Democrats in 1903 and worked for the party in Baku. After the 1905 Revolution, he studied in Vienna, and became a friend of Trotsky, helping edit his newspaper *Pravda* in 1908–12. He was a Social-Democratic delegate to the Fourth State Duma from 1912 to 1917. He chaired the Petrograd Soviet after the February Revolution, and was later the Minister of Labour (*Ministr truda*) in the Provisional Government. Opposing the Bolshevik regime, he returned to Baku in then-independent Azerbaijan in 1919, and emigrated to Paris a year later. Still, he helped re-establish trade relations between the Soviet Union and France between 1921 and 1923. He became a member of the RKP(b) in 1922. In 1924, he joined the Soviet Trade Delegation in London. He was arrested in 1937, accused of terrorism, and executed in 1938. He was rehabilitated in 1957. See also **Duma; Left Deviations; Provisional Government; Vienna Pravda**.

Ivan Ivanovich **Skvortsov-Stepanov**, born I. Stepanov (1870–1928), joined the populist movement in 1890, and spent various periods in exile for his activities. He joined the Bolshevik faction of the RSDRP in 1905, and was very active in preparing for the October insurrection in 1917. After October, he was involved in editing work on *Izvestiia* and *Pravda*. He was against the conclusion of the Brest Peace in early 1918, and became a Left Communist. He was an advocate of political censorship and militant atheism. He directed the Institute of Lenin in 1926. He died of typhus in 1928 and his ashes are interred in the Kremlin Wall. See also **Institute of Lenin; Opposition; Populism**.

Smolny, the Smolny Institute (*Smol'nyi institut*) in St. Petersburg, began life as the Institute for Young Noble Women (*Institut blagorodnykh devits*) in 1806–8, the first educational establishment for women in Russia. Lenin chose this building as the Bolshevik headquarters during the October Revolution, until the government moved to the Kremlin in Moscow. Smolny then became the Petersburg Communist Party headquarters. Sergei Kirov, head of the Petersburg Communist Party, was assassinated here in 1934. See also **Finland Station**; **Kirov**; **Mariinsky Palace**; **Peter and Paul Fortress**; **Sarai** and **Shalash**; **Winter Palace**.

The **Socialist Revolutionary Party** (*Partiia sotsialistov-revoliutsionerov*, PSR, SRS) called for nationalisation of the land and large industries and for popular rule. It grew out of the unification of several populist groups. The party advocated terrorism in its fight against tsarism, assassinating a number of high government officials in the first five years of the twentieth century. The first congress of the PSR took place in Finland in December 1905 and January 1906, and adopted the party programme drafted by Viktor Chernov, its chief theorist. The programme called for a federated, democratic republic on the basis of popular franchise as the road to socialism, and the PSR tried to attract not only peasants but also urban workers. The party soon split over ideological differences. A right wing, the later Popular Socialists (*Narodnye sotsialisty*), wanted to forgo terrorist acts in favour of legal activities. A left wing, the SR Maximalists, wanted to nationalise the land and industry and create a toilers' republic (*Respublika trudiashchikhsia*). In the First World War, the PSR split into Defencists and Internationalists depending on their stance on the war. In 1917, they enjoyed significant influence in the Soviets, and co-operated in the Provisional Government, particularly in the person of Alexander Kerensky, Minister of Justice and later Prime Minister. While most SRS agitated against the Bolsheviks after October, the left wing of the party, the Left SRS, formed at the Fourth Party Congress in November–December 1917, co-operated with the Bolsheviks until the Peace of Brest-Litovsk, which they opposed as a betrayal of the revolution. The Right SRS were expelled from the Soviets in June 1918, the Left SRS were expelled in July. The PSR organisations were suppressed by the Bolsheviks, and several leaders of the party were put on trial in Moscow in 1922. In the émigré centres of Paris, Berlin, and Prague, SR leaders kept up their critique of Soviet Russia through publicistic activities. See also **Chernov**; **Kerensky**; **Opposition**; **Populism**; **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

Grigorii Iakovlevich **Sokol'nikov**, born Girsh Iankelevich Brilliant (1888–1939), joined the RSDRP(b) in 1905 and took part in the events of 1905–7, including the Moscow uprising in December 1905. He was arrested and exiled in 1907, although he quickly fled from internal exile to France. From 1917 he belonged to the Moscow Committee of the party, was on the Executive Committees of the Moscow Soviet and the Petrograd Soviet,

and served as Commissar of Banks. He replaced Trotsky as chair of the Soviet delegation that signed the Brest Peace in March 1918. He was on the editorial board of *Pravda*. He was a commissar of the Eighth Army during the Civil War. From 1920, he was involved in Turkestan affairs, as the chairman of the Turkbiuro of the Central Committee and as commander of the Turkestan front. From 1922 to 1926, he was People's Commissar of Finance of the RSFSR (*Narkom finantsov RSFSR*). From 1926, he was deputy chairman of the State Planning Commission of the USSR (*Gosplan sssr*). He became critical of the economic system in the USSR and of Stalin's role as General Secretary of the party, whereupon he served as Soviet ambassador to England from 1929 to 1932. From 1932, he was in the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the USSR (*Narkomat inostrannykh del sssr*). He was expelled from the party and arrested in July 1936 during the second Moscow show trial, the so-called Trial of 'Parallel Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Centre'. He was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in January 1937, and was killed in prison by other prisoners in 1939 on the orders of the NKVD. He was rehabilitated by the Supreme Court of the USSR on 12 June 1988, and was posthumously restored to the party on 16 December 1988. See also **Show Trials**.

Sorin. I am unable to find information on this individual.

Sotsial-demokrat (*Social Democrat*) was an illegal newspaper, which after the 1912 Prague Conference at which Lenin essentially proclaimed his faction to be the party, became the organ of the CC of the Bolsheviks. It had been established as an organ of the RSDRP since 1908, and had published in Paris from 1909–13, and later in Geneva from 1914–17. It last appeared in January 1917. Until co-opted by Lenin, it had included Mensheviks like Martov and Dan on its editorial board. See also *Pravda*.

Sotsialisticheskii vestnik (*Socialist Courier*) was the organ of the Foreign Delegation of the RSDRP (*Zagranichnaia delegatsiia RSDRP*) and published from 1921 to 1963 in Berlin, Paris, and finally New York, moving its headquarters as the leaders of the Menshevik emigration moved in response to the rise of the Nazis in Europe. It sustained an unstinting critique of the Soviet state and Bolshevik policies. See also **Dan**; **Martov**; **Mensheviks**.

The **South Russian Workers' Union** (*Iuzhno-Russkii Rabochii Soiuz*) was co-founded by Trotsky in Nikolaev in 1897 and fought for workers' rights, but was quickly shut down by the police. It was the beginning of Trotsky's revolutionary activity. See also **Trotsky**.

Boris Souvarine, born Lifshitz (1895–1984), fought in the First World War, and after his discharge worked as a socialist journalist writing on internationalist issues. He joined the French Section of the Workers' International (SFIO) in 1914, and was a founder

of the French Communist Party (PCF). He was a delegate to the Third Congress of the Comintern in 1921, and was on its Executive Committee while living in Moscow as spokesman for the left wing of the PCF. In 1924, he defended Trotsky's positions, particularly on *The New Course*, before the PCF, and was expelled from both the PCF and the Comintern in July. He returned to France in 1925, where he set up his own oppositional group in France, although in the late 1920s he diverged from Trotsky on a number of issues, eventually breaking with him. He spent the rest of his life in Paris writing and commenting on Soviet affairs. See **Comintern**; **Opposition**.

The **Soviets**, elected bodies of workers', soldiers', and peasants' deputies, first emerged from strike committees during the 1905 Revolution. Trotsky led the St. Petersburg Soviet, which was composed mainly of socialist delegates. Suppressed after the revolution, Soviets reappeared after the February Revolution of 1917, first as Soviets of Workers' Deputies, and later as Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. The Petrograd Soviet, created on 12 March, shared power in an uneasy relationship with the Provisional Government that came to be known as 'dual power'. In the course of 1917, Bolsheviks came to dominate the Petrograd and other Soviets, and set up the Military Revolutionary Committee in the Petrograd Soviet to co-ordinate the October insurrection. The Bolsheviks sanctified the October insurrection at the Second Congress of Soviets on 25 October 1917. Peasant Soviets' that had been created in March 1917 were soon folded into Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies. See also **Congress of Soviets**; **Dual Power**; **Trotsky**.

The **Sovnarkom** or Council of People's Commissars (*Sovet narodnykh kommissarov*) was formed on 27 October 1917 as the government of the new Soviet state by a decree adopted at the Second All-Russian Congress of the Soviets. Trotsky counselled that the term 'council' and the title of 'commissar' were less 'bourgeois' than 'cabinet' and 'minister' (although in 1946, sovnarkom was renamed the Council of Ministers (*Sovet ministrov*)). The first sovnarkom was chaired by Lenin, and included leading Bolsheviks of the time, such as Trotsky, Stalin, Lunacharsky, Vladimir Antonov-Ovseenko, Rykov, among others. A significant number of these men were executed in the purges of the 1930s. See also **Show Trials**.

Spetsy. See **Bourgeois Specialists**.

Maria Aleksandrovna **Spiridonova** (1884–1941) was a leading Socialist Revolutionary who began her revolutionary activity in local SR organisations in the Tambov region, eventually joining the Fighting Organisation of the party. She was selected to assassinate a tyrannical vice-governor of Tambov province. She was exiled to Siberia for the assassination, and on her release after the February Revolution she became a leader of

the Left srs and led them into collaboration with the Bolshevik. She was chair of the All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Deputies, and was a leader of the failed uprising of the Left srs in Moscow in 1918. She continued to live in Moscow, but suffered repression at the hands of the Bolsheviks, and unsuccessfully attempted to flee into the emigration. She was arrested in 1937, charged with engaging in counter-revolutionary terrorist acts as an SR, and sentenced to 25 years in prison. She was shot in September 1941, partially rehabilitated in 1988, and completely in 1992. See also **Chernov**; **Kerensky**; **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**; **Socialist Revolutionary Party**.

srs. See **Socialist Revolutionary Party**.

Iosif Vissarionovich **Stalin**, born Dzhugashvili (1879–1953), was a seminary-educated Georgian who joined the RSDRP in 1898 in Tiflis. He participated in major party congresses in Finland in 1905, Stockholm in 1906, and London in 1907. He helped raise funds for the Bolsheviks through 'expropriations' (bank robberies) in Tiflis. After Lenin's Prague Conference in 1912, he worked on the editorial board of *Pravda* in St. Petersburg. In 1912, he visited Lenin in exile in Poland and also spent time in Vienna. He returned to St. Petersburg in 1913, but was arrested and exiled to Siberia. Freed after the February Revolution, he took a moderate stance in early 1917 in support of the Provisional Government and thus in support of other moderate Bolsheviks as well as Mensheviks and srs. After Lenin's return in April, however, he became a fervent supporter of Lenin's call for immediate insurrection. After the October Revolution, Stalin was People's Commissar for Nationalities (*Narodnyi Kommissar Narodnosti*) from 1917 to 1923. In the Civil War, he was a political commissar and clashed frequently with Trotsky. Stalin was in the Politburo from its inception. As Lenin ailed in the early 1920s, Stalin manoeuvred for power, and Lenin privately expressed his concerns about Stalin's fitness for leadership. Nonetheless, he delivered the key speech at Lenin's funeral on 21 January 1924, delivering an oath of fealty to Lenin's principles. At the time of the 'literary discussion', he was one of the powerful '*semerka*' (The Seven) that made up the Politburo. Stalin led the state in a triumvirate with Zinoviev and Kamenev after Lenin's death. In the course of the next few years, Stalin clashed with – and defeated – Trotsky over the question of permanent revolution as opposed to Stalin's policy of 'Socialism in One Country'. He then allied with Bukharin and Rykov to outmanoeuvre Zinoviev and Kamenev (the 'New Opposition'), his former allies against Trotsky who were now supporting Trotsky. Finally, he moved against his former allies, Bukharin and Rykov (now deemed the 'Right Opposition') by seeding the Politburo with his own allies like Molotov, Voroshilov, Kaganovich, and so on. Once his power was beyond dispute, he launched rapid industrialisation and forced collectivisation in the First Five Year Plan beginning in 1929. He also instigated and prosecuted the vicious purge of former allies and broad swathes of the population in the 1930s. His political star rose again during the Second World War,

when he found himself once again in alliance with former enemies in the West against the Nazis. His final years were marked by xenophobia, anti-Semitism and chauvinism. He died unexpectedly in March 1953, with the USSR possibly on the brink of a new era of purges. See also **April Theses**; **Opposition**; **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik)**; **Semerka**; **Show Trials**.

Aleksandar Stamboliiskii. See **Agrarian Union**.

The **State Planning Commission** (Gosplan, *Gosudarstvennyi Planovyi Komitet*) was established in 1921 to oversee the planning of a socialist economy in the new Soviet state. It became most effective after 1928 during the period of forced industrialisation and the substitution of the mixed NEP economy with a reduced private sector and increased planned state sector.

I. Stepanov. See **Skvortsov-Stepanov**.

STO. See **Council of Labour and Defence**.

The **Stockholm Peace Conference** was in the planning stages from May through August 1917. It was an effort by socialists from all over the world to bring the First World War to an end through negotiation, after the shock of Russia's February Revolution in 1917. Many socialists were forbidden by their individual governments from attending the conference in Sweden, and this, combined with the complex organisational efforts, meant that a full conference never took place. At the Seventh All-Russian Conference of the RSDRP(b) in April, M. Borgbjerg, a Danish socialist, suggested that Russian socialists participate in the conference. At Lenin's insistence, the party refused. The later push by Kamenev for participation in the conference caused a sharp disagreement between him and Lenin. See also **Second International**; **Zimmerwald Conference**.

The ***Stolypinshchina*** ('Stolypin regime') referred to the tsarist government's brutal repression of revolutionary activities after the failure of the 1905 Revolution. The term is derived from the name of the Prime Minister from 1906–11, Petr Stolypin (1862–1911), who implemented these policies, and was assassinated in 1911. In revolutionary lore, the term *Stolypinshchina* became shorthand for brutal, last-gasp government resistance to revolutionary activity. See also **Reaction**.

Petr Berngardovich **Struve** (1870–1944) was an active Social Democrat from the 1880s who founded a Marxist circle at St. Petersburg University in 1890. He participated in the Second International and edited the first Marxist journals in Russia. He was one of the initial organisers of the newspaper *Iskra*, in which Lenin became prominent.

He moved gradually towards liberalism, shifting his activities from Marxist to zemstvo liberal circles. He edited the journal *Osvobozhdenie* (*Liberation*) from 1902. He spent long periods in European exile, returning to Russia in 1905, and joined the CC of the Kadet Party in which he remained until 1915, although he had effectively split with the party in 1908. He edited the journal *Russkaia mysl'* (*Russian Thought*) from 1906 until its closure by the Bolsheviks in 1918. Most of his activity was in legal institutions like the Dumas. He objected to the Bolshevik insurrection in October 1917, and was active in the White movement of General A. Denikin during the Civil War. After his departure from Soviet Russia, he sustained his criticisms from exile, and was elected chair of the Russian Congress Abroad (*Rossiiskii zarubezhnyi s'ezd*) that met in Paris in April 1926. His name is synonymous in the 'literary discussion' with a failure to understand true Marxism and an eventual betrayal of those early principles through his participation in the Kadet Party and the part he played in the Civil War. The term 'Struivism' occurs here in this regard. See also **Bernstein**; **Duma**; *Iskra*; **Kadets**; **Second International**.

Nikolai Nikolaevich **Sukhanov**, born Gimmer (1882–1940), joined the Socialist Revolutionary Party in 1903 and was arrested in 1904. He took part in the armed uprising in Moscow in December 1905. He later joined the Mensheviks in 1909. He edited the journal *Sovremennik* (*The Contemporary*) in 1914, and collaborated with Gorky in 1917 on *Novaia zhizn'* (*New Life*). He was on the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet after the February Revolution. After the October Revolution, he criticised Bolshevik repression of the press and of the political parties. He broke with the Mensheviks in 1920, and worked at an economics institute in Moscow. He was dismissed in 1930, and accused, at the 1931 Menshevik trial, of counter-revolutionary activity. He was sentenced to ten years imprisonment. He was shot on 29 June 1940 in Omsk. He was rehabilitated posthumously. See also **Chernov**; **Kerensky**; **Socialist Revolutionary Party**.

Sukharevka was the nickname for a famous market in Moscow.

Iakov Mikhailovich **Sverdlov** (1885–1919) was a revolutionary activist of long standing who joined the RSDRP in 1901, and became a Bolshevik with the 1903 split. He worked in local Urals party organisations. During the 1905 Revolution, he was creator and head of the Ekaterinburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies. During the Reaction, he suffered periods of arrest and exile. He was released after the February Revolution, and was sent to Ekaterinburg to work in the party organisation there. After October, he became chair of the Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, and of the Committee of Revolutionary Defense of Petrograd (*Komitet revoliutsionnoi oborony Petrograda*) from January 1918. He was deeply involved in organising proletarian cadres to run the new socialist state. He was also chair of the Commission to draw up a

Constitution of the RSFSR. He died in March 1919, probably of Spanish flu, and was interred in the Kremlin Wall.

Syrkin. I am unable to find information on this individual.

Tailism (*khvostizm*) was a term often applied by Bolsheviks to the so-called 'opportunistic' behaviour of their political opponents, who were 'backward' in their thinking because they always followed in the wake of events (the 'tail') rather than in the forefront.

Tambov Unrest. See **NEP**.

The **Tausves-Jontof** is a commentary on the Talmud by the Prague rabbi Yom Tov Lipmann ben Nathan Heller (1579–1654). It is famously referred to in Heinrich Heine's 'Disputation':

He called on the Mishna's teachings,
 Commentaries, notes, and tracts,
 Citing from the Tousfes Yontov
 Many cogent quotes and facts.
 But upon his ruffled hearing,
 Ah, what blasphemies now fall!
 Cries the monk: 'The Tousfes Yontov
 Doesn't mean a thing at all!'

HEINE 1982, p. 686

Ten Days That Shook the World. See **Reed**.

Umberto **Terracini** (1895–1983) joined a socialist youth group in Genoa in 1911 and the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) in 1916. He became a communist after the October Revolution in Russia, and after the split in the PSI in January 1921 he joined the CC of the new Italian Communist Party (PCI). He participated in the Third Congress of the Comintern in Moscow in 1921 and by 1923 was on its Executive Committee. After his return to Italy in the mid-1920s, he fell foul of the rising fascist movement there, suffering periods of arrest and imprisonment for his political activities. He became a deputy to the Italian parliament after the war. See also **Comintern**; **Serrati**; **Turati**.

Tesniaki. See **Bulgarian Communist Party**.

August **Thalheimer** (1884–1948) was a philosopher and theoretician of the Communist Party of Germany. He joined the SPD in 1904, was active in the Spartacus group in the First World War, and took part in the November Revolution in Stuttgart in 1918. He was skeptical about the chances of revolution in the early 1920s, and he was blamed for the defeat of the revolution in Germany in 1923. He was expelled in 1924, and held in Moscow from 1924–8. He emigrated to France in 1933, was interned in 1939, and fled to Cuba two years later. See also **Communist Party of Germany**; **German Revolution of 1918–19**; **German Revolution of 1923**.

Thersites. See **Achilles**.

Albert **Thomas** (1878–1932) was a French socialist, who from 1904 served on the editorial board of *L'Humanité*. He served in the First World War in various ministerial capacities. After the Versailles Treaty, he became Director General of the International Labour Office, a position he held until his death.

Mikhail Pavlovich **Tomsky** (1880–1936) was an Old Bolshevik who joined the Russian Social Democratic party in 1904, and participated in the 1905 Revolution. Arrested and exiled abroad, he took part in foreign meetings of the party. He returned to Moscow in 1909 and was again arrested and sentenced, this time to five years hard labour. He was a defencist during the First World War. He arrived in Petrograd in April 1917, and moved to Moscow. He worked in the Union of Metalworkers (*Soiuz metallistov*), and became chair of the Moscow Council of Trade Unions (*Moskovskii sovet professional'nykh soiuzov*) in December. He opposed Trotsky in the party discussion on trade unions. In 1922, he became secretary of the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (*Vsesoiuznyi Tsentral'nyi Soiuz Professional'nykh Soiuzov*, or VTsSPS), and represented it frequently at domestic and foreign gatherings. At the time of the 'literary discussion', he was one of the powerful '*semerka*' (*The Seven*) that made up the Politburo. After the 'literary discussion', he joined Stalin, Bukharin, and Rykov against the 'New Opposition' of Kamenev and Zinoviev, but in 1929 joined Bukharin and Rykov in opposing the policy of forced industrialisation and collectivisation. He was expelled from the Politburo a year later. In the 1936 Trial of the Sixteen, Tomsky was implicated by the defendants in counter-revolutionary activities. On reading about this in the newspaper, he shot himself in his dacha in August 1936. He was posthumously accused of counter-revolution at the Trial of the Twenty One in 1938. He was rehabilitated and restored to the party in 1988. See also **Defencism**; **Semerka**; **Show Trials**.

The **Treaty of Brest-Litovsk** (the Brest Peace) was signed on 3 March 1918, ending the war between Russia and Germany. After October, the Bolsheviks, with their slogan of 'peace, bread, and land', very quickly pushed for negotiations to cease hostilities

with the Central Powers. After a temporary armistice was signed on 2 December 1917, peace negotiations began on 22 December in Brest-Litovsk near the Polish border. The German delegation was led by Foreign Secretary Richard von Kühlmann and General Max Hoffmann, the Russian delegation by Adol'f Ioffe and Kamenev (later, by Trotsky). The Bolsheviks wanted a peace 'without annexations and indemnities', essentially meaning that the new revolutionary government in Russia would cede neither land nor money. Lenin, in the conflicted Central Committee of the party, was pushing to accept German demands and safeguard the revolution. When Trotsky, in frustration, withdrew Russia from the negotiations on 10 February 1918, he declared unilaterally a policy of 'no war, no peace', namely an end to the fighting but without signing a formal peace treaty. The Germans responded with a new offensive that routed Russian troops. Lenin's view prevailed, and Russia signed the treaty. Under the terms of the peace, Russia ceded her Polish, Baltic and, in part, her White Russian provinces, among other areas. Russia also recognised the independence of the Ukraine and Finland, and agreed to pay an enormous amount of reparations. The Soviet government annulled the treaty on 13 November 1918, two days after it had been set aside by the armistice of 11 November between the Allies and the Central Powers. See also **Sokol'nikov**; **Trotsky**.

Boris Efimovich **Treivas** (1898–1937) joined the RKP(b) in 1918 and from 1918 to 1919 was head of the publishing house of the Jewish Commissariat of the People's Commissariat of the Nationalities (*Evreiskii komissariat Narodnogo Komissariata Narodnostei*). In 1921–2, he was secretary of the Moscow Committee of Komsomol. He was a member of the so-called Youth League Ninety Three which had signed a declaration of support for Trotsky in the 'discussions'. He attended the Sverdlov Communist University. He was arrested in 1937 and shot. See also **Komsomol**.

Leon (Lev) Davidovich **Trotsky**, born Bronstein (1879–1940), was a life-long revolutionary activist. His activities in populist and Social-Democratic circles in the late 1890s brought him arrest and exile to Siberia. He later moved into exile in London, where he collaborated with Lenin on *Iskra*. At the Second Congress of the RSDRP in 1903, he supported Lenin's position that led to the split in the party, although he became alienated by some of Lenin's actions and gravitated towards other prominent Social Democrats who were now Mensheviks, notably Axelrod and Zaslulich. In the 1905 Revolution, he played a prominent role as one of the leading figures in the St. Petersburg Soviet of Workers' Deputies. For his efforts, he was again exiled to Siberia, but escaped abroad once again. His second period of exile took him to Vienna, where he engaged in various publicistic and journalistic endeavours, mostly devoted to finding a non-factional position to adopt vis-à-vis the fractured RSDRP. He also served as a war correspondent in the Balkan Wars prior to the First World War. By way of various difficulties in New York

and Halifax, Trotsky managed to return to Russia in May 1917, becoming leader of the *mezhraiontsy*. This group, and Trotsky, merged with the Bolsheviks in August 1917. With Lenin absent in the underground after the July Days, Trotsky became very prominent in the Bolshevik leadership and in the preparations for armed insurrection. He helped set up the Military Revolutionary Committee to this end. After October, Trotsky was the first People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs (*Narodnyi Kommissar Inostrannykh Del*), in which capacity he played a major role in deliberations over the Brest Peace. His iconic status was really burnished during the Civil War, however, when, as People's Commissar of Military and Naval Affairs of the Soviet Union (*Narodnyi Kommissar voennym i morskim delam SSSR*) from 1918 to 1924, he set up the Red Army and secured victory in the Civil War. Throughout the first half of the 1920s, he found himself in almost perpetual conflict with the RKP(b) leadership. In the winter of 1923–4, he railed against the leadership for violating party democracy, for which he was censured for violating the party's 1921 rule against factionalism. The 'literary discussion' a year later revolved around him and his work 'The Lessons of October' and the claims it made about the significance of both the October Revolution and the party's role in it. He clashed again in 1926–7 with Stalin, this time over the latter's policy of 'Socialism in One Country'. Isolated and vilified, Trotsky was expelled from the Politburo in 1926, from the party and the Comintern in 1927, and from the USSR in 1929. His peripatetic existence as a revolutionary of real stature in the international communist movement took him to Turkey, France, Norway, and ultimately Mexico, where he found a partially more receptive environment in the form of a Mexico dominated by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (*Partido Revolucionario Institucional*, PRI), although he was still fiercely criticised by the Stalinist Mexican Communist Party. He was the inspiration for the establishment of the Fourth International in 1938 in Paris, the challenge to the Stalinist Comintern. He was murdered in the town of Coyoacán on 20 August 1940 by a Stalinist agent. See also *Bor'ba*; Comintern; *Iskra*; *Mezhraiontsy*; *Opposition*; *Parvus*; *Show Trials*; *Treaty of Brest-Litovsk*; *Vienna Pravda*.

Aleksandar Tsankov. See *September Anti-Fascist Uprising*.

Iraklii Georgevich Tsereteli (1881–1959), a Georgian, was a Menshevik leader and leader of the Siberian Zimmerwaldists. He was a deputy in the Second Duma in 1907, was arrested and exiled. After February 1917, he became a leader of the Executive Committee of the Soviets (*Ispolnitel'nyi komitet sovetov*, Ispolkom) and was in favour of a coalition government. He joined the Provisional Government as Minister of Post and Telegraph (*Ministr pocht i telegrafov*) and then as Minister of the Interior (*Ministr vnutrennykh del*). After October, which he opposed, he attended the Constituent Assembly meeting, and then returned to Georgia, where he joined the government of the independent Georgian Republic. After the Red Army entered Georgia in 1921, he went into the

emigration, first to France and in 1940 to New York, where he was a representative of Georgian Social Democrats abroad. See also **Mensheviks**; **Provisional Government**.

Filippo **Turati** (1857–1932) was a politician, poet, and journalist, who founded the right, reformist wing of the Italian Socialist Party (PSI) in 1892. His belief in a gradualist approach to socialist revolution earned him the scorn of many Russian revolutionary Marxists. See also **Serrati**; **Terracini**.

TsKK. See **Central Control Commission**.

‘**Tushino turncoats**’ was a term used by Lenin (Lenin 1964y) to refer to traitors to the cause. It derived from the Time of Troubles (*Smuta*) in early seventeenth-century Russia when Polish troops under a false tsar invaded Russia and camped at Tushino on the outskirts of Moscow. A government was formed here around the false tsar in opposition to the government in Moscow. Russian boyars who deserted from camp to camp in an effort to be on the winning side were called ‘Tushino Turncoats’.

The Two and a Half International. See **Second International**.

Ultimatists. See **Left Deviations**.

Unifiers (*Ob’edinenttsy*). See **Mensheviks**.

United Front. See **Comintern, Third Congress**.

Moisei (Mikhail) Solomonovich **Uritskii** (1873–1918) joined the revolutionary movement in the 1890s, for which he was arrested and spent five years in Siberian exile. After the split in the RSDRP in 1903, he gravitated towards the Mensheviks. An Internationalist during the war, he was a friend of Trotsky. He first joined the *mezhraiontsy*, and later the Bolshevik Party in July 1917. He was part of the Military Revolutionary Committee that organised the October insurrection. He became head of the Petrograd Cheka (*Extraordinary Commission for the Struggle Against Counterrevolution and Sabotage*) after the revolution, and was assassinated by the SR L. Kanegisser on 30 August 1918. See also **Cheka**; **Mensheviks**; **Mezhraiontsy**.

Vacillators (*kolebliushchiesia*) was a term attached to Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov and other Bolsheviks who at key historical moments had acted in defiance of Lenin’s will. Two particular incidents are singled out. First, on 10 October 1917, Kamenev and Zinoviev voted against Lenin’s plans for an immediate seizure of power and published an open letter outlining their stance. Lenin was outraged. Still, Kamenev and Zinoviev

supported the insurrection when it took place on 25 October. Second, ten days after the October seizure of power, Zinoviev, Kamenev and others believed that the Bolsheviks needed to form a coalition government with the Mensheviks and SRs if the government were to survive. They resigned from the CC on 4 November (17 November NS), publicised their misgivings, and were issued a CC ultimatum to submit to party discipline, which they did. They rejoined the CC at that point. In the 'literary discussion', the term vacillator became an unwanted epithet for any Bolshevik who was perceived to have failed to recognise the need for decisive action at key junctures in the revolutionary movement. See **Conciliators; Left Deviations; Opposition**.

Emile **Vandervelde** (1866–1938) was a Belgian statesman. He joined the Belgian Workers' Party (*Parti Ouvrier Belge*) in 1886, and was its president from 1928–38. He served as chair of the International Socialist Bureau from 1900–18, and was chair of the Executive of the Labour and Socialist International from 1929–35. See also **Comintern; Second International**.

Vardin, born Illarion Vissarionovich **Mgeladze** (1890–1941), was a Georgian critic, publicist, and member of the Trotskyist opposition. He was a member of the *Oktiabr'* (*October*) group, and a leading collaborator on *Na postu*. He was expelled from the Communist Party in 1927, and was readmitted after self-criticism in 1929. He was purged once and for all in 1941. Bukharin used the term 'vardinism' to denote an overly politicised literary subgenre. See **Opposition**.

Ioakim Ioakimovich **Vatsetis** (1873–1938) was a colonel who joined the Bolsheviks. He was Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army from September 1918 to July 1919. He was later a teacher in the Frunze Military Academy. He was arrested in November 1937, charged with espionage and being a member of a counter-revolutionary terroristic organisation, and shot in July 1938. He was rehabilitated in 1957. See also **Show Trials**.

Vikenty Vikent'evich **Veresaev**, born Smidovich (1867–1945), was a Russian writer and a member of the Legal Marxists. He served in the Russo-Japanese War in 1904 as an army doctor. He welcomed the October Revolution, and subsequently devoted his time to the cultural development of the population. He received various Soviet awards for his service.

The **Vienna Pravda** was a newspaper founded by Trotsky in the emigration and published from 1908–12. Intended from the outset for illegal distribution inside tsarist Russia during the Reaction, Trotsky sought to rally and invigorate the workers on a non-factional platform. To this end, he argued that the workers should shun the factionalism tearing apart the RSDRP, as he saw it, and unite behind the goal of revolu-

tion. The revival of the revolutionary movement inside Russia made the newspaper redundant and it closed in 1912. A brief spat ensued over the name of the newspaper, as the new Bolshevik newspaper adopted the same name. See also *Bor'ba*; *Pravda*; Trotsky.

Vikzhel' (All Russian Executive Committee of the Railway Union) (*Vserossiiskii ispolkom zheleznodorozhnogo profsoiuza*) was formed after the February Revolution in 1917. It was instrumental in scuttling the Kornilov mutiny, when the railwaymen sabotaged the movements of Kornilov's forces. Vikzhel' was mostly made up of moderate socialists who proposed a conference of representatives from all socialist parties and trade unions. They wanted an 'all-socialist government from the Popular Socialists to the Bolsheviks'. Protracted negotiations from 29 October to 5 November brought no concrete proposals. Vikzhel' was soon dissolved by the new Soviet government. In the 'literary discussion', Vikzhel' also carried negative connotations, and was criticised by Zinoviev, among others, for dithering at key moments in 1917, notably for not immediately sending workers from Petrograd to aid the Moscow uprising. See also 'homogeneous socialist government'; Kornilov Affair; Provisional Government.

VKP(b). See **Russian Communist Party (bolshevik).**

Vladimir Savelevich **Voitinskii** (1885–1960) was a Russian revolutionary who joined the RSDRP in 1903 as a Bolshevik. He was on the St. Petersburg Committee of the RSDRP during the 1905 Revolution. He suffered various periods of arrest and exile in subsequent years, coming under the influence of Tsereteli's 'Siberian Zimmerwaldists' between 1912 and 1916. On his return from exile after the February Revolution, he broke with the Bolsheviks, and joined the Mensheviks. He was Commissar of the Northern Front in 1917. He was arrested after the October Revolution. He went to Georgia in 1918 and worked in the Georgian Democratic Republic. He emigrated in 1919 first to Germany, and later to Switzerland, and in 1935 to the USA where he continued his criticism of the USSR. See also **Mensheviks**.

V. Volodarsky, born Moisei Markovich Gol'dshtein (1890–1918), was very active in the Jewish Bund, and then in *Spilka*, the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party. He worked as a political agitator from 1908–11 in Volynia, and was frequently arrested, imprisoned, and exiled. In 1913, fleeing the tsarist police, he emigrated to America, where he joined the American Socialist Party. In New York, he worked closely with Bukharin and Grigorii Chudnovskii on the newspaper *Novyi mir* (*New World*). He returned to Russia after the February Revolution of 1917, together with other revolutionaries, including Trotsky, whom he idolised. Volodarsky first joined the *mezhraiontsy*, and only later joined the Bolsheviks. In 1918, he was People's Commissar for Press, Propaganda, and Agitation

(*Komissar po delam pechaty, propagandy i agitatsii*). He also edited the Petrograd newspaper *Krasnaia gazeta* (*Red Newspaper*). He was assassinated by a Socialist Revolutionary in Petrograd in 1918. See also **Bund**; **Liber**; *Mezhraiontsy*.

Vorwärts (*Forward*) was the central organ of the Socialist Workers' Party of Germany (SAPD) and began publishing in 1876. It printed major pieces by Friedrich Engels and other socialist theoreticians.

Vperedism. See **Left Deviations**.

VRK. See **Military Revolutionary Committee**.

VTsIK. See **Central Executive Committee of the Soviets**.

VTsSPS. See **Central Council of Trade Unions**.

War Communism was the name given to the period from mid-1918 to early 1921 in Soviet Russia, when, in the interests of both Civil War exigencies and ideological aspirations, the Soviet state sought to direct the entire industrial production and distribution apparatus. All large industries were nationalised in mid-1918, as were small-scale enterprises in late 1920. State-organised requisitioning and rationing replaced the capitalist market, and the economy essentially became a moneyless one. As the Civil War wound down, the parlous state of the economy by early 1921 led to popular unrest across the country, and the Soviet state retreated from its statist policies to a more mixed economy, the NEP. See also **NEP**.

H.G. Wells (1866–1946) was a famed English writer who wrote in various genres, including science fiction, history, and social commentary. A committed socialist, he became intrigued by the aspirations of the October Revolution. He eventually visited the Soviet Union in 1934, even meeting with Stalin to discuss political theory. See **Reed**.

The **Winter Palace** (*Zimnii dvorets*) in St. Petersburg was the imperial residence. From October 1915 to November 1917, a military hospital operated in the palace. From July to November 1917, the Provisional Government was housed here. After the October Revolution, the Winter Palace was transformed into an iconic site of the new revolutionary narrative, the Bolsheviks creating a mythic 'storming' of this Russian 'Bastille'. On the third anniversary of the October Revolution, Nikolai Evreinov staged a mass spectacle in Palace Square in which he 're-enacted' the storming of the palace. This 'storming' received its most famous and enduring treatment, however, in Eisenstein's film *October* (*Oktiabr'*) in 1927. The Winter Palace was turned into a state museum in

January 1920. See also **Aurora**; **Finland Station**; **Mariinskii Palace**; **Peter and Paul Fortress**; **Smolny**, *Zaria Svobody*.

Worker and Peasant Inspectorate (*Raboche-krest'ianskaia inspeksiia*, Rabkrin) was a people's commissariat created in 1920 to supervise the branches of the state administration with a view to eliminating inefficiency and corruption. It came under sharp criticism in its first years for its own inadequacies, and was merged in 1923 with the Communist Party Central Control Commission, becoming a joint organ of supervision. See also **Central Control Commission**.

Workers' Faculties (*Rabochie fakul'tety*, or *rabfaky*) were educational institutions specifically designed for workers in early Soviet Russia as a way of removing the traditional barriers to higher education and opening up the new Soviet institutions to ideologically trained working class members.

Workers' Group of the RKP. See **Opposition**.

Workers' Opposition. See **Opposition**.

Workers' Truth Group. See **Opposition**.

Baron Petr Nikolaevich **Wrangel'** (1878–1928) was a former tsarist general, who participated in the war with Japan in 1904 and served on the South Western Front in the First World War. He led anti-Bolshevik forces during the Civil War, succeeding General Denikin as commander-in-chief of the White army in Southern Russia in 1920. After defeat by the Bolsheviks, he and his remaining forces were evacuated to Constantinople. In the emigration, he engaged in military matters, notably in his 1924 creation of the Russian All-Military Union (*Russkii obshchevoinskii soiuz*, or ROVS), which united the bulk of the participants of the White Movement in the emigration. In 1927, he moved to Brussels, dying of tuberculosis after a few months. In the 'literary discussion', the term 'Wrangelites' (*Vrangel'tsy*) was used as a generic term for any adherence to the 'White' (i.e. reactionary) side in the Civil War. See also **Denikin**; **Iudenich**; **Kaledin**; **Kolchak**; **Mamontov**.

Petr Antonovich **Zalutskii** (1887–1937) was a worker at the Franco-Russian Factory (*Franko-Russkii zavod*) in St. Petersburg, and he joined the RSDRP in 1907. He suffered arrest and exile for his revolutionary activity. He took part in the October Revolution in 1917, and fought in the Civil War. He was in the Petersburg Soviet and in the Petersburg Committee of the Bolshevik Party after 1917. In the 1920s, he occupied various positions in the party administration in Kursk, the Urals, and in Leningrad. He was banned

from the party in 1925 and restored three years later. He was again arrested in 1934, and executed in 1937. He was rehabilitated and his party membership was restored in 1962. In the 'literary discussion', Bukharin invokes him as the epitome of the 'worker vanguard' type.

Zaria. See *Rabochaia gazeta*.

Zaria svobody (*Dawn of Freedom*) was a battleship launched in 1887, and originally christened *The Emperor Alexander II* (*Imperator Aleksandr II*). It is famous in revolutionary lore for being the first tsarist battleship to see an organised Social-Democratic circle on its decks (in 1902), the beginning of an ever more revolutionised crew. During the October Revolution, it was sent from Kronstadt to guard the route to Petrograd from the sea, although it did not achieve the iconic status of the *Aurora*. See also **Aurora**.

Clara **Zetkin**, born Eissner (1857–1933), was a German activist in the international communist movement, and was especially prominent in the Second International. During the First World War, she, together with Liebknecht, Luxemburg, and others, decried the opportunism of the Socialist Party of Germany (SPD) and was deeply critical of the war. She joined the Spartacists, the foundation for the later Communist Party of Germany (KPD). Her close acquaintance with Lenin brought her to Russia in 1920, where she worked on women's issues in the new Soviet state. In the Weimar Republic, she represented the KPD in the Reichstag. She also served on the Executive Committee of the Comintern from 1921–33, and participated in its congresses. See also **Comintern**; **Communist Party of Germany**; **Liebknecht**; **Luxemburg**; **Second International**.

Noi Nikolaevich **Zhordaniia** (Comrade An.) (1869–1953), a Georgian, joined the Georgian Social Democratic movement in 1894. He suffered repeated arrests and exiles, and joined the RSDRP in 1898. He participated in the Second Congress of the RSDRP in 1903, becoming a Menshevik after the split. He served as a SD deputy to the First Duma. After the February Revolution, he was chair of the Tiflis Soviet. He was hostile to the October Revolution, and helped set up the government of the independent Georgian Democratic Republic, becoming its head in July 1918. After the Bolsheviks took Georgia in 1921, he emigrated to Paris. See also **Duma**; **Mensheviks**; **Russian Social Democracy**.

The **Zimmerwald Conference** was a meeting of international socialists from 5–8 September 1915 in Zimmerwald, Switzerland. The goal of the many socialist delegates there, including Socialist Revolutionaries, was to work out a common platform of opposition to the war. Just before the conference, Lenin organised a small group of Internationalists (the Zimmerwald Left) to protest what he saw as the centrist proclivity of the majority at the conference. Indeed, many at the conference felt that the confer-

ence's tone and intent were too pacifist. Lenin wanted the conference to call for full mobilisation of the international working classes to take advantage of this revolutionary era. The conference created an International Socialist Commission which was in essence a new International Socialist Bureau. Centrists left this commission in favour of the short-lived and abortive International Working Union of Socialist Parties (*Internationale Arbeitsgemeinschaft Sozialistischer Parteien*, or IASP, also known as the 2½ International and the Vienna International). See also **Comintern**; **Kienthal Conference**; **Second International**; **Stockholm Peace Conference**.

Grigorii Evseevich **Zinoviev**, born Ovsei-Gershon Aronovich Radmysl'skii (1883–1936), was an Old Bolshevik who joined the RSDRP in 1901. From 1909–17, he, together with Kamenev, was in the leadership of the Bolshevik group abroad. He returned to Russia with Lenin in the sealed train through Germany. He was a member of the Central Committee of the party from 1912–27, and a full member of the Politburo in October 1917 and again from 1921–6. He took part in the revolutions of 1905 and 1917. From 1917–26, he was chair of the Petrograd (Leningrad) Soviet; and from 1919–26, chair of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. At the time of the 'literary discussion', he was one of the powerful '*semerka*' (The Seven) that made up the Politburo. After Lenin's death in January 1924, he formed a triumvirate with Stalin and Kamenev to take over the leadership, and clashed bitterly with Trotsky over stances he, Zinoviev, had taken in 1917 that had placed him in opposition to Lenin. After Trotsky's defeat, Zinoviev was stripped of power and joined up with Trotsky and Kamenev in opposition to Stalin. He was expelled from the Politburo in July 1926, from the Central Committee in October 1927, and from the party in November. He was restored to the party in June 1928. From 1928, he was rector of Kazan' University, and from 1931, a member of the board of the People's Commissariat of Enlightenment of the RSFSR (*Narkomat prosveshcheniia RSFSR*). He was again expelled from the party in October 1932, and was in exile in Kustanai in 1932–3, after which he was on the leadership of the Central Union of Consumer Co-operatives (*Tsentrosoiuz*) and on the editorial board of the journal *Bol'shevik*. He was once more restored to the party in December 1933, and finally expelled in December 1934. He was arrested on 16 December 1934, was sentenced to 10 years prison in January 1935. He was one of the accused in the Trial of the Sixteen, a show trial held in August 1936 in which the defendants were accused of plotting to assassinate Stalin and other party and state officials. He was sentenced to death and shot in August 1936. He was rehabilitated by the Supreme Court of the USSR on 13 June 1988. Partly as a result of the 'literary discussion' and the broader internecine fighting within the party, Zinoviev's (and Kamenev's) name became associated in official Soviet discourse with weak will, lack of political foresight, and betrayal. See also **Comintern**; **Kamenev**; **Semerka**; **Show Trials**.

Mikhail Mikhailovich **Zoshchenko** (1895–1958) was a very popular Soviet writer and satirist, who joined *The Serapion Brothers* in the early 1920s. His writings reflected a steady disillusionment with revolutionary promises through the 1920s and the 1930s. His later more pessimistic stories brought him trouble from the Union of Soviet Writers in 1946, and his downturn in fortunes left him poverty-stricken until just before his death. See also **Gorky**.

Zvezda (*The Star*) was a Bolshevik legal newspaper that published in St. Petersburg from December 1910 to April 1912. Its first editorial board consisted of Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, but in October 1911 it became a solely Bolshevik newspaper, advocating revolutionary Marxism against what the editors regarded as liquidationist or recallist elements. See also **Pravda**.

Bibliography

- 25 let R.K.P. (bol'shevikov) 1898–1923. *Illustrirovannyi iubileinyi sbornik* 1923, Moscow-Petrograd: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 'A.I. Berdnikov – I.V. Stalinu. 21 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.
- Albert, Gleb J. 2011, "'German October is Approaching": Internationalism, Activists, and the Soviet State in 1923', *Revolutionary Russia*, 24, 2.
- Allen, Barbara C. 2015, *Alexander Shlyapnikov, 1885–1937: Life of an Old Bolshevik*, Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- Arkhiv Trotskogo. Kommunisticheskaia oppositsiia v SSSR, 1923–1927* 1990, Vol. 1, edited by Iu. Fel'shtinskii, Moscow: 'Terra'.
- 'A.S. Martynov-Piker – G.E. Zinov'evu, ne pozdnee 13 noiabria 1924 g.', *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7, 1991.
- Averbakh, L. 1924, *Voprosy iunosheskogo dvizheniia i Lenin*, Moscow: 'Molodaia gvardiia'.
- Avrich, Paul H. 1960, 'The Short Course and Soviet Historiography', *Political Science Quarterly*, 75, 4.
- Babakhan, N. 1925, 'Ob 'Urokh Oktiabria' tov. Trotskogo', in *Leninizm ili Trotskizm?*, Kazan': Izdanie Tatarskogo Oblastnogo Komiteta RKP(b).
- Babichenko, L.G. 1994, 'Politbiuro TsK RKP(b), Komintern i sobytia v Germanii v 1923 g. Nove arkhivnye materialy', *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia*, 2.
- Baker, Keith Michael 1990, *Inventing the French Revolution*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Bayerlein, Bernhard 1999, 'The Abortive "German October", 1923. New Light on the Revolutionary Plans of the Russian Communist Party, the Comintern and the German Communist Party', in *Politics and Society Under the Bolsheviks. Selected Papers from the Fifth World Congress of Central and East European Studies*, edited by K. McDermott and J. Morison, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern* 1986, edited by Branko Lazitch, Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press.
- Black, Clayton 2000, 'Legitimacy, Succession, and the Concentration of Industry: Trotsky and the Crises of 1923 Re-Examined', *Russian History/Histoire Russe*, 27, 4.
- Boiarskii, P. 1928, *Pochemu Trotskizm vernulsia k Men'shevizmu?*, Moscow-Leningrad.
- Bol'shevizm ili Trotskizm. Sb. st.*, Kursk: n.p. 1925.
- Brandenberger, David 2011, *Propaganda State in Crisis: Soviet Ideology, Indoctrination, and Terror Under Stalin, 1927–1941*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- 2013, 'Ideological Zig Zag: Official Explanations for the Great Terror, 1936–1938', in *The Anatomy of Terror: Political Violence under Stalin*, edited by James Harris, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brooks, Jeffrey 2000, *Thank You, Comrade Stalin! Soviet Public Culture from Revolution to Cold War*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Broué, Pierre 1988a, *Trotsky*, Paris: Fayard.
- 1988b, 'Trotsky et l'histoire en U.R.S.S.', *Cahiers Leon Trotsky*, 34, June.
- Bubnov, A. 1921, *Osnovnye momenty v razvitií kommunisticheskoi partii v Rossii*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924, *Osnovnye voprosy istorii R.K.P.* Moscow: n.p.
- 1931, *VKP(b)*, Moscow: 'Krasnyi proletarii'.
- Bukharin, N.I. 1925, *K voprosu o Trotskizme*, Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- Buranov, Yuri 1994, *Lenin's Will: Falsified and Forbidden*, Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.
- Burdzhalov, E.N. 1956, 'XXS"ezd KPSS i zadachi issledovaniia istorii partii', *Voprosy istorii*, 3.
- Carr, E.H. 1969, *The Interregnum 1923–1924*, Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books.
- 1970, *Socialism in One Country 1924–1926*, Vol. 2, Baltimore, MD: Penguin Books.
- Cassiday, Julie A. 2000, *The Enemy on Trial: Early Soviet Courts on Stage and Screen*, DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.
- 'Chleny TsK i TsKK KP(b) Ukrainy – chlenam TsK RKP(b). Ne pozdnee 23 fevralia 1925 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 8.
- Churchill, Winston S. 1937, *Great Contemporaries*, New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.
- Clark, Katerina 1995, *Petersburg. Crucible of Cultural Revolution*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cliff, Tony 1991, *Trotsky: Fighting the Rising Stalinist Bureaucracy, 1923–1927*, London: Bookmarks.
- Corney, Frederick C. 1985, 'Trotskii and the Vienna *Pravda*, 1908–1912', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, XXVII, 3.
- 2000, 'Narratives of October and the Issue of Legitimacy', in *Russian Modernity: Politics, Knowledges, Practices*, edited by David L. Hoffmann and Yanni Kotsonis, New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc.
- 2004, *Telling October: Memory and the Making of the Bolshevik Revolution*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- 'Correspondance [sic] between Bordiga and Trotsky' 2004, *International Review*, 21, 52, retrieved from: http://en.internationalism.org/ir/101_bordiga.htm
- Cox, Michael 1992, 'Trotsky and His Interpreters; or, Will the Real Leon Trotsky Please Stand up?' *Russian Review*, 51, 1.
- Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution 1914–1921* 1997, edited by Edward Acton, Vladimir Iu. Cherniaev and William G. Rosenberg, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Daian, G. 1924, Review of 'L.D. Trotsky, *O Lenine*', *Krasnaia nov'*, 4.
- Daniels, Robert V. 1960, *The Conscience of the Revolution. Communist Opposition in Soviet Russia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- 1991, 'The Left Opposition as an Alternative to Stalinism', *Slavic Review*, 50, 2.
- Danilov, Victor and Cathy Porter 1990, 'We Are Starting to Learn about Trotsky', *History Workshop*, 29, Spring.
- Day, Richard B. and Daniel F. Gaido 2009, *Witnesses to Permanent Revolution: The Documentary Record*, Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- 2013, 'Permanent Revolution – But Without Socialism?' *Science & Society*, 77, 3.
- Desolre, Guy 1980, 'L'Antitrotskyisme en Union soviétique aujourd'hui', *Cahiers Leon Trotsky*, 5.
- Deutscher, Isaac 1954, *The Prophet Armed, 1879–1921*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- 1959, *The Prophet Unarmed, 1921–1929*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- 1963, *The Prophet Outcast, 1929–1940*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Deutscher Oktober 1923. Ein Revolutionsplan und sein Scheitern* 2003, edited by Bernhard H. Bayerlein, Leonid G. Babičenko, Fridrich I. Firsov and Aleksandr Ju. Vatlin, Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag.
- Die Lehren der deutschen Ereignisse: Das Präsidium des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale zur deutschen Frage. Januar 1924* 1924, Hamburg: Carl Hoym, Verlag der Kommunistischen Internationale.
- Diskussia 1923 goda. Materialy i dokumenty* 1927, Moscow and Leningrad: n.p.
- Doloi fraktsionnost'! Otvet tsentral'nogo organa partii tov. Trotskomu* 1924, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Krasnaia nov'.
- Eastman, Max 1973, *Since Lenin Died*, Westport, CT: Hyperion Press.
- 'E.I. Kvirring – I.V. Stalinu. 5 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 8.
- 'E.M. Iaroslavskii – I.V. Stalinu. 27 dekabria 1924 g., and E.M. Iaroslavskii – Politbiuro TsK RKP(b). 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.
- Ennker, Benno 1997, *Die Anfänge des Leninkults in der Sowjetunion*, Cologne: Böhlau Verlag.
- Engels, Friedrich 1967, *The German Revolutions. The Peasant War in Germany and Germany: Revolution and Counter-Revolution*, edited by Leonard Krieger, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Entsiklopedicheskii slovar' Brokgauz i Efron: biografii* 1991, 12 vols, Moscow: 'Sov. Entsiklopediia'.
- Epic Revisionism: Russian History and Literature as Stalinist Propaganda* 2006, edited by Kevin M.F. Platt and David Brandenberger, Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- The Errors of Trotskyism* 1925, edited by J.T. Murphy, London: Communist Party of Great Britain.
- Fel'shtinskii, Iu. G. and G.I. Cherniavskii 2013, *Lev Trotskii. Kniga 3. Oppozitsioner. 1923–1929 gg.*, Moscow: Tsentrpoligraf.
- Fel'shtinsky, Yuri 1990, 'Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin and the Left Opposition in the USSR 1918–1928', *Cahiers du monde russe et soviétique*, xxxi, 4 (October–December).

- Figes, Orlando and Boris Kolonitskii 1999, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution. The Language and Symbols of 1917*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Firger, I. 1923, 'Oktiabr'skaia revoliutsiia v Ivanovo-Voznesenske (Iz vospominanii)', *Krasnaia letopis'*, 6.
- Geldern, James von 1993, *Bolshevik Festivals 1917–1920*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Girchak, E.F. 1927, *Izmena Leninizmu. Sbornik statei*, Samara: Izdatel'stvo 'Proletarii'.
- Gödeke, Herwig 1991, 'Zum Trockij-Bild im neueren sowjetischen Schrifttum', *Mitteilungen. Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Bibliotheken und Dokumentationsstellen der Ost-, Ostmittel-, und Südosteuropaforschung*, [ABDOS] 11, 4.
- Goloshchekin, F. 1925, *Protiv Trotskizma*, Samara: Izd. Puokra Privo.
- Gorbachev, M.S. 1987, 'Oktiabr' i perestroika: Revoliutsiia prodolzhaetsia', *Kommunist*, 17.
- Gorham, Michael S. 2003, *Speaking in Soviet Tongues: Revolutionary Language Culture and the Politics of Voice*, DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.
- Gor'kii, M. 1924, 'Vladimir Lenin', *Russkii sovremennik*, 1.
- Great Soviet Encyclopedia* 1973–82, 31 vols, New York: Macmillan.
- Grishina, R.P. 1996a, 'Sentiabr'skoe vosstanie 1923 g. v Bolgarii v svete novykh dokumentov', *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia*, 5.
- 1996b, 'Sentiabr'skoe vosstanie 1923 g. v Bolgarii v svete novykh dokumentov' [conclusion], *Novaia i noveishaia istoriia*, 6.
- Hale, William Harlan 1961, 'When the Red Storm Broke', *American Heritage Magazine*, 12, 2.
- Halfin, Igal 2003, 'Between Instinct and Mind: The Bolshevik View of the Proletarian Self', *Slavic Review*, 62, 1.
- 2007, *Intimate Enemies. Demonizing the Bolshevik Opposition, 1918–1928*, Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- 2011, *Red Autobiographies: Initiating the Bolshevik Self*, Seattle, WA: Herbert J. Ellison Center for Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies.
- Hatch, John B. 1989, 'The "Lenin Levy" and the Social Origins of Stalinism: Workers and the Communist Party in Moscow, 1921–1928', *Slavic Review*, 48, 4.
- Heer, Nancy Whittier 1971, *Politics and History in the Soviet Union*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Heine, Heinrich 1982, *The Complete Poems of Heinrich Heine*, Cambridge, MA: Suhrkamp/Insel Publishers Boston, Inc.
- Heller, Ilse 1982, 'Zur Entwicklung der sowjetischen Geschichtswissenschaft in den Jahren 1917–1928', *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Arbeiterbewegung*, 5.
- Hincks, Darron 1992, 'Support for the Opposition in Moscow in the Party Discussion of 1923–1924', *Soviet Studies*, 44, 1.
- History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). Short Course* 1939, New York: International Publishers.

- Hitchens, Christopher 2004, 'The Old Man', *The Atlantic Monthly*, July–August.
- Hunt, Lynn 1984, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Iaroslavskii, E. 1926a, *Novaia Oppozitsiia i Trotskizm*, Leningrad.
- 1926b, *Istoriia VKP(b)*, Vol. I, Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1927, 'Bol'sheviki v Oktia bre', *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 10.
- 1929, *Istoriia VKP(b)*, Vol. IV, Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- In the Steps of Rosa Luxemburg. Selected Writings of Paul Levi* 2011, edited by David Fernbach, Leiden and Boston: Brill.
- Istoriia RKP(b) v dokumentakh* 1927, Vol. I, edited by V.I. Nevskii, Leningrad: n.p.
- 'I.V. Stalin – TsK KKP(b) Ukrainy. 29 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.
- 'I.V. Stalin – Kamchatskomu Gubkomu RKP(b). Ne pozdnee 17 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 8.
- 'I.V. Stalin i N.I. Bukharin – Politbiuro TsK RKP(b). 5 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 8.
- 'I.V. Stalin – E.I. Kviringu. 11 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 8.
- 'I.V. Stalin v rabote nad 'Kratkim kursom istorii VKP(b)' 2002, *Voprosy istorii*, 12.
- 'I.V. Stalin v rabote nad 'Kratkim kursom istorii VKP(b)' 2003a, *Voprosy istorii*, 3.
- 'I.V. Stalin v rabote nad 'Kratkim kursom istorii VKP(b)' 2003b, *Voprosy istorii*, 4.
- 'Iz protokola zasedaniia plenuma Leningradskogo gubkoma RKP(b). 10 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.
- Jenssen, Otto and Max Adler 1924, *Der lebendige Marxismus: Festgabe zum 70. Geburtstage von Karl Kautsky*, Jena: n.p.
- J.S. 1925, 'Die Levi-Ausgabe von Trotzki's "Lehren des Oktober": Eine Warnung', *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, 26, May.
- Kak ne nuzhno pisat' istoriiu Oktiabria (po povodu knigi tov. Trotskogo '1917')* 1924, Leningrad, Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- Kanatchikov, S. 1924, *Istoriia odnogo uklona*, Leningrad: 'Priboi'.
- Kautsky, Karl 1925, 'Die Lehren des Oktoberexperiments', *Die Gesellschaft*, 1.
- Kerenskii, A.F. 1922, *Izdaleka: Sbornik statei, 1920–1921 g.* Paris: Russkoe knigoizdatel'stvo Ia. Povolotskago i Ko.
- Kerensky, Alexander 1965, *Russia and History's Turning Point*, New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce.
- King, David 1997, *The Commissar Vanishes: The Falsification of Photographs and Art in Stalin's Russia*, New York: Metropolitan Books.
- Klushin, V.I. 1997, *'Karaiushchaia desnitsa revoliutsii' pered sudom vremeni: k istokam metamorfoz 'filosofii istorii' L.D. Trotskogo*, Leningrad: n.p.
- Kolokolkin, V. 1927, *Levyi kommunizm*, M.-L.: n.p.
- Kotkin, Stephen 2014, *Stalin. Vol. 1: Paradoxes of Power, 1878–1928*. New York: Penguin.

- Kroen, Sheryl 2000, *Politics and Theater: The Crisis of Legitimacy in Restoration France, 1815–1830*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Kruzhinov, V.M. 2000, *Politicheskie konflikty v pervoe desiatiletie sovetsskoi vlasti (na materialakh Urala)*, Tiumen': Izdatel'stvo Tiumenskogo universiteta.
- 'Kto riadom s V.I. Leninym?' 1989, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 9.
- Lang, Andrew 1893, *Letters to Dead Authors*, New York: C. Scribner's Sons.
- L.D. Trotskii o partii v 1904 g. Broshiura N. Trotskogo – 'Nashi politicheskie zadachi' s kommentariiami Istparta i vstypitel'noi stat'ei E. M. Iaroslavskogo 1928, Moscow-Leningrad: n.p.
- 'L.D. Trotskii – Politbiuro TsK RKP(b). 19 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 8.
- Lenin o Trotskom i Trotskizme* 1925, Moscow: 'Novaia Moskva'.
- Lenin, N. 1924, 'Ko vsem sots.-dem. partiinym organizatsiiam, gruppam i kruzham', *Sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. XI, Part 2, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- Lenin, V.I. 1960a [1894], 'What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats', *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1960b [1899], 'The Development of Capitalism in Russia', *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1961a [1902], 'What Is To Be Done?' *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1961b [1903], 'Second Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. July 17 (30)-August 10 (23), 1903', *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1962a [1906], 'Lessons of the Moscow Uprising', *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1962b [1907], 'The Fifth Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. April 30–May 19 (May 13–June 1), 1907', *Collected Works*, Vol. 12, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1962c [1905], 'The Revolutionary-Democratic Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Peasantry', *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1962d [1905], 'Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1962e [1907], 'The Agrarian Programme of Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905–1907', *Collected Works*, Vol. 13, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1962f [1905], 'New Tasks and New Forces', *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1962g [1905], 'Two Tactics', *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963a [1911], 'From the Camp of the Stolypin "Labour" Party (Dedicated to our "conciliators" and advocates of "agreement")', *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963b [1913], 'Notes of a Publicist (June 15, 1913)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

- 1963c [1910], 'Notes of a Publicist', *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963d [1910], 'The State of Affairs in the Party', *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963e [1911], 'Resolution Adopted by the Second Paris Group of the R.S.D.L.P. on the State of Affairs in the Party', *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963f [1911], 'The New Faction of Conciliators, or the Virtuous', *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963g [1911], 'Trotsky's Diplomacy and a Certain Party Platform', *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963h [1910], 'The Historical Meaning of the Inner-Party Struggle in Russia', *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963i [1912], 'The Liquidators Against the Party', *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963j [1912], 'The Anonymous Writer in *Vorwärts* and the State of Affairs in the R.S.D.L.P.', *Collected Works*, Vol. 17, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963k [1912], 'The Slogans of the All-Russia Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. in January 1912 and the May Day Movement', *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963l [1912], 'The Revolutionary Upswing', *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963m [1912], 'How P. B. Axelrod Exposes the Liquidators', *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963n [1912], 'The Platform of the Reformists and the Platform of the Revolutionary Social-Democrats', *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963o [1910], 'The Vperyod Faction', *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963p [1924], 'Letter to I. I. Skvortsov-Stepanov', *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963q [1909], 'The Aim of the Proletarian Struggle in Our Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963r [1913], 'The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism', *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1963s [1913], 'Controversial Issues. An Open Party and the Marxists', *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964a [1917], 'On Slogans', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964b [1917], 'Letters on Tactics', *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964c [1917], 'Letters from Afar', *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

- 1964d [1917], 'The Tasks of the Proletariat in the Present Revolution [aka The April Theses]', *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964e [1917], 'The Tasks of the Proletariat in Our Revolution. Draft Platform for the Proletarian Party', *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964f [1917], 'Constitutional Illusions', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964g [1917], 'Kamenev's Speech in the C.E.C. on the Stockholm Conference', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964h [1917], 'To the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964i [1917], 'Heroes of Fraud and the Mistakes of the Bolsheviks', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964j [1917], 'Marxism and Insurrection. A Letter to the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. (B.)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964k [1917], 'The Crisis has Matured', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964l [1917], 'Letter to the Central Committee, the Moscow and Petrograd Committees and the Bolshevik Members of the Petrograd and Moscow Soviets', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964m [1917], 'Theses for a Report at the October 8 Conference of the Petrograd Organisation, also for a Resolution and Instructions to Those Elected to the Party Congress', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964n [1917], 'Letter to Central Committee Members', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964o [1915], 'Several Theses. Proposed by the Editors', *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964p [1902], 'Material for the Preparation of the Programme of the R.S.D.L.P.', *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964q [1917], 'Revision of the Party Programme', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964r [1917], 'Advice of an Onlooker', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964s [1917], 'Lessons of the Crisis', *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964t [1917], 'How a Simple Question Can Be Confused', *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964u [1917], 'Foolish Gloating', *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964v [1917], 'From a Publicist's Diary. The Mistakes of Our Party', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

- 1964w [1917], 'The Bolsheviks Must Assume Power', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964x [1917], 'On Compromises', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964y [1914], 'Disruption of Unity Under Cover of Outcries for Unity', *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964z [1914], 'The Right of Nations to Self-Determination', *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964aa [1914], 'The Break-Up of the "August" Bloc', *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964bb [1915], 'The Defeat of One's Own Government in the Imperialist War', *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964cc [1915], 'The State of Affairs in Russian Social Democracy', *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964dd [1915], 'Socialism and War (The Attitude of the R.S.D.L.P. towards the War)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964ee [1915], '[Pis'mo] A. M. Kollontai', *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii*, Vol. 49, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury.
- 1964ff [1915], 'On the Two Lines in the Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964gg [1916], 'The Tasks of the Opposition in France (Letter to Comrade Safarov)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964hh [1916], 'The Peace Programme', *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964ii [1916], 'The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up', *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964jj [1916], 'Imperialism and the Split in Socialism', *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964kk [1917], 'The Petrograd City Conference of the R.S.D.L.P. (Bolsheviks)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964ll [1917], 'Speech on the Cancellation of the Demonstration, Delivered at a Meeting of the Petrograd Committee of the R.S.D.L.P. (B.), June 11 (24), 1917', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964mm [1917], 'Meeting of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) October 10 (23), 1917', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964nn [1917], 'Meeting of the Central Committee of the R.S.D.L.P.(B.) October 16 (29), 1917', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964oo [1917], 'Letter to Comrades', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964pp [1917], 'Theses On The Constituent Assembly', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

- 1964qq [1917], 'Resolution of the C.C. of the R.S.D.L.P. (B.) on the Opposition within the C. C. November 2 (15), 1917', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964rr [1917], 'The State and Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964ss [1916], 'Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism', *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964tt [1914], 'The Ideological Struggle in the Working-Class Movement', *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964uu [1915], 'What Next? On the Tasks Confronting the Workers' Parties with Regard to Opportunism and Social-Chauvinism', *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964vv [1917], 'Honest Defencism Reveals Itself', *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964ww [1915], 'On the Slogan for a United States of Europe', *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964xx [1917], 'Can the Bolsheviks Retain State Power?', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964yy [1915], 'The Collapse of the Second International', *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964zz [1905], 'On the Provisional Revolutionary Government', *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964aaa [1917], 'A Basic Question', *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964bbb [1917], 'Second All-Russia Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, October 2–26 (November 7–8), 1917. Report on Land', *Collected Works*, Vol. 26, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1964ccc [1917], 'Telegram to the Bolsheviks Leaving for Russia', *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965a [1918], 'The Immediate Tasks of the Soviet Government', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965b [1918], 'The Revolutionary Phrase', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965c [1905], 'Social-Democracy and the Provisional Revolutionary Government', *Collected Works*, Vol. 8, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965d [1923], 'How We Should Reorganise the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection. Recommendation to the Twelfth Party Congress', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965e [1918], 'Speech on the Question of Elections to the Central Committee, March 8 (Evening). Extraordinary Seventh Congress of the R.C.P.(b.), March 6–8, 1918', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

- 1965f [1918], 'The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky', *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965g [1918], 'Preface to the Collected Articles *Against the Stream*', *Collected Works*, Vol. 27, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965h [1920], 'The Trade Unions, the Present Situation, and Trotsky's Mistakes', *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965i [1906], 'Preface to the Russian Translation of K. Kautsky's Pamphlet: *The Driving Forces and Prospects of the Russian Revolution*', *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965j [1919], 'Deception of the People with Slogans of Freedom and Equality (Foreword)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965k [1919], 'A Great Beginning. Heroism of the Workers in the Rear "Communist Subbotniks"', *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965l [1904], 'One Step Forward, Two Steps Back (The Crisis in Our Party)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965m [1906], 'Guerrilla Warfare', *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965n [1906], 'The Attitude of the Bourgeois Parties and of the Workers' Party to the Duma Elections', *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965o [1921], 'A Letter to G. Myasnikov', *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965p [1905], 'The Reorganisation of the Party', *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1965q [1919], 'The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat', *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1966a [1916], 'To A. G. Shlyapnikov', *Collected Works*, Vol. 35, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1966b [1920], 'Left-Wing Communism: An Infantile Disorder', *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1966c [1920], 'On the Struggle of the Italian Socialist Party', *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1966d [1921], 'Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1966e [1922], 'Speech at a Plenary Session of the Moscow Soviet (November 20, 1922)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1966f [1923], 'On Cooperation', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1966g [1923], 'Better Fewer, But Better', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1966h [1923], 'Our Revolution (Apropos of N. Sukhanov's *Notes*)', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

- 1966i [1920], 'The Eighth All-Russia Congress of Soviets, December 22–29, 1920. Report on the Work of the Council of People's Commissars', *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1966j [1922], 'Role and Functions of the Trade Unions Under The New Economic Policy. Decision Of The C.C., R.C.P. (B.), January 12, 1922', *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1969a [1917], 'The Attention of Comrades!', *Collected Works*, Vol. 41, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- 1970 [1921], 'To the Participants in a Sitting of the Commission on Tactics of the Third Congress of the Comintern', *Collected Works*, Vol. 45, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- Leninizm ili Trotskizm?* 1924, Moscow: 'Moskovskii rabochii'.
- Leninizm ili Trotskizm. Sbornik statei i rechei* 1925, Sverdlovsk: n.p.
- Leninskii sbornik* 1924, Vol. 11, Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- Leo Trotzki 1879–1940. In den Augen von Zeitgenossen* 1979, Hamburg: Junius Verlag.
- Lévy, Roger 1920, *Trotsky*, Paris: Librairie du Parti Socialiste et de l'Humanité.
- Lewin, Moshe 1968, *Lenin's Last Struggle*, New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Leyda, Jan 1983, *Kino. A History of the Russian and Soviet Film*, 3rd edition, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Lih, Lars T. 2012, 'Democratic Revolution in *Permanenz*', *Science & Society*, 76, 4.
- 2013, 'Permanent Revolution: A Rejoinder', *Science & Society*, 77, 3.
- Literaturnaia polemika po povodu knigi tov. Trotskogo '1917'. Sb. rechei, statei i retsenzii* 1925, Moscow and Khar'kov.
- Lunacharskii, A.V. 1919, *Velikii perevorot*, Petersburg: Izd. Z.I. Grzhebina.
- Lüsebrink, Hans-Jürgen and Rolf Reichardt 1986, 'La prise de la Bastille comme "événement total". Jalons pour une théorie historique de l'événement à l'époque moderne', in *L'Événement (Actes du colloque organisé à Aix-en-Provence par le Centre Meridional d'Histoire Sociale, les 16, 17 et 18 septembre 1983)*, Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence.
- 1990, *Die Bastille. Zur Symbolgeschichte von Herrschaft und Freiheit*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag.
- The Making of Three Russian Revolutionaries* 1987, edited by Leopold H. Haimson in collaboration with Ziva y Galili Garcia and Richard Wortman, Cambridge and Paris: Cambridge University Press and Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme.
- Marie, Jean-Jacques 2006, *Trotsky. Révolutionnaire sans frontières*, Paris: Biographie Payot.
- Marks, K. and F. Engels 1957, 'Predislovie', *Sochineniia*, Vol. 8, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury.
- Marot, John Eric 2006, 'Trotsky, the Left Opposition and the Rise of Stalinism: Theory and Practice', *Historical Materialism*, 14, 3.

- 2013, 'A Maverick in European Social Democracy: Trotsky's Political Trajectory Between 1905 and 1917', *Science & Society*, 77, 3.
- Martov, L. 1923a, *Istoriia Rossiiskoi Sotsial-Demokratii*, Petrograd.
- 1923b, *Mirovoi bol'shevizm*, Berlin: 'Iskra'.
- Martynov, A.S. 1905, *Dve diktatory*, Geneva: Tipografiia Partii.
- 1925, *U istokov Trotskizma*, Leningrad: Rabochee Izdatel'stvo 'Priboi'.
- Na putiakh k Oktiabriu: Stat'i i rechi: mart-oktiabr' 1917* 1925, Leningrad: Gos. izd-vo.
- Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels 1958, 'Address of the Central Committee to the Communist League', *Selected Works in Two Volumes*, Vol. 1, Foreign Languages Publishing House.
- 1975, 'Marx to Ludwig Kugelmann in Hanover. London, 12 April 1871', *Collected Works*, Vol. 44, New York: International Publishers.
- 1979, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', *Collected Works* Vol. 11, New York: International Publishers.
- 1992, *The Communist Manifesto*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Maslov, N.N. 1989–90, *Short Course of the History of the All-Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) – An Encyclopedia of Stalin's Personality Cult*, *Soviet Studies in History*, 28, 3.
- Medvedev, Roy 2005, 'How the *Short Course* Was Created', *Russian Politics and Law*, 43, 3.
- 'Memuary Nikity Sergeevicha Khrushcheva' 1990, *Voprosy istorii*, 4.
- 'Monin i Prikazchikov – I.V. Stalinu. 10 dekabria 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.
- 'M.P. Tomskii – I.V. Stalinu. 6 ianvaria 1925 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 8.
- 'N.A. Uglanov – I.V. Stalinu. 18 dekabria 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.
- Nabokov, Vladimir 1960, *Pnin*, London: Penguin.
- Nevskii, Vl. 1917, *Chto takoe bol'sheviki?*, Petrograd: n.p.
- 1921, *Bol'shevik, kommunist i rabochii*, Petersburg, 1921.
- 1924, 'Literatura o Lenine', *Pechat' i revoliutsiia*, Book 4, July–August.
- 1926, *Istoriia RKP(b). Kratkii ocherk*, Leningrad: Rabochee izdatel'stvo 'Priboi'.
- Newsinger, John 1999, *Orwell's Politics*, London: Macmillan Press.
- North, David 2010, *In Defense of Leon Trotsky*, Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books.
- Not Guilty. Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Charges Made Against Leon Trotsky in the Moscow Trials* 1938, New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers.
- Novyi kurs' – 'Doloi fraktsionnost!'* 1924, Tver': Part-izd-vo 'Oktiabr'.
- Nureev, Rustem 2008, 'The *Short Course of the History of the All-Union Communist Party*: The Distorted Mirror of Party Propaganda', in *The Lost Politburo Transcripts: From Collective Rule to Stalin's Dictatorship*, edited by Paul R. Gregory and Norman Naimark, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Ob 'Urokhakh Oktiabria'* 1924, Leningrad: Rabochee Izdatel'stvo 'Priboi'.

- Oktiabr'skii perevorot. Fakty i dokumenty* 1918, Petrograd: Izd-vo 'Novaia Epokha'.
- Ol'minskii, M. 1921, 'Ot Istparta', *Biulleten' Istparta*, 1.
- Ozouf, Mona 1988, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Pantsov, A.V. 1990, 'Istoricheskie portrety. Lev Davidovich Trotskii', *Voprosy istorii*, 5, 31 May 1990.
- Partiia i oppozitsionnyi blok* 1926, Minsk: NP.
- Parvus 1908, *Die Sozialdemokratie und der Parlamentarismus*, Berlin: Buchhandlung Vorwärts.
- 1910, *Der Sozialismus und die soziale Revolution*, Berlin: Buchhandlung Vorwärts.
- Patenaude, Bertrand M. 2009, *Trotsky: Downfall of a Revolutionary*, New York: Harper-Collins.
- 'P.A. Zalomov – Obshchestvu byvshikh politkatorzhan i ssl'noposelentsev. 18 dekabria 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.
- Pervyi legal'nyi Peterburgskii komitet bol'shevikov v 1917 g.* 1927, Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- Petrogradskaya obshchegorodskaya i Vserossiiskaya konferentsii R.S.-D.R.P.(bol'shevikov) v aprele 1917 g.* 1925, Moscow and Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- Petrogradskii sovet rabochikh i soldatskikh deputatov v 1917 godu. Tom chertvertyi. 3 iulia–25 oktiabria 1917 goda* 2003, Moscow, ROSSPEN.
- Petropavlovskii, S. 1925, *Uroki Trotskizma*, NP: Kiev.
- Pinnow, Kenneth M. 2010, *Lost to the Collective. Suicide and the Promise of Soviet Socialism, 1921–1929*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Pirani, Simon 2008, *The Russian Revolution in Retreat, 1920–24: Soviet Workers and the New Communist Elite*, London: Routledge.
- Pis'ma P.B. Akse'roda i Iu. O. Martova* 1924, Berlin: Russkii Revoliutsionnyi Arkhiv.
- Placke, Gerd 1994, *Historische und soziale Analyse der Revolution bei Leo Trotzki. Ein Beitrag zur Theorie der permanenten Revolution and ihrer Entwicklung in den Jahren 1923–1933*, Frankfurt Am Main: Peter Lang.
- Plamper, Jan 2012, *The Stalin Cult. A Study in the Alchemy of Power*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Podvoiskii, N. 1923, 'Voennaia organizatsiia Ts. K. R.S.-D.R.P.(bol'shevikov) i voenno-revoliutsionnyi komitet 1917 g. (Okonchanie)', *Krasnaia letopis'*, 8.
- Politicheskii ustav Krasnoi Armii i Flota* 1922, Petrograd: n.p.
- 'Po povodu stat'i tov. Trotskogo (Otvet redaktsii)' 1924, *Bol'shevik*, 12–13, 1924.
- Potashev, A.F. 1992, *V.I. Lenin i L.D. Trotskii. Uroki ideinoi bor'by vnutri praviashchei partii (Istoriografiia voprosa)*, Rostov-on-Don: Izdatel'stvo Rostovskogo universiteta.
- 'Proekt rezoliutsii plenuma TsK RKP(b). 24 oktiabria 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.

- 'Proekt rezoliutsii soveshchaniia aktiva Moskovskogo komiteta RKP(b). 17 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.
- Protiv Trotskizma*: 36–60 tysiacha 1925, Moscow-Leningrad: n.p.
- 'Protokol zasedaniia Biuro TsK RLKSM. 10 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.
- Protokoll der Konferenz der Erweiterten Exekutive der Kommunistischen Internationale, Moskau, 12.–23. Juni 1923* 1923, Hamburg: C. Hoym Nachf L. Cahnbley.
- Protokoly Tsentral'nogo Komiteta RSDRP(b). Avgust 1917–fevral' 1918* 1958, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izd-vo.
- Protsess antisovetskogo Trotskistskogo tsentra (23–30 ianvaria 1937 goda)* 1937, Moscow: Iuridicheskoe izdatel'stvo.
- Radkey, Oliver Henry 1990, *Russia Goes To The Polls: The Election to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly, 1917*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Reed, John 1982, *Ten Days That Shook the World*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Resolutions and Decisions of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* 1974, Vol. 1, edited by R.C. Elwood, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Reznik, Aleksandr 2010, *Trotskizm i levaia oppozitsiia v RKP(b) v 1923–1924*, Moscow: Svobodnoe marksistskoe izdatel'stvo.
- Rid, Dzhon 1924, *10 dnei kotorye potriasli mir*, Moscow: Izdanie 'Krasnaia nov'.
- RKP(b): Vnutripartiinaia bor'ba v dvadtsatye gody: Dokumenty i materialy, 1923 g.* 2004, Moscow: ROSSPEN.
- Rogovin, Vadim 1992, *Byla li al'ternativa? 'Trotskizm': Vzgliad cherez gody*, Moscow: 'Terra'.
- Rolf, Malte 2006, *Das sowjetische Massenfest*, Hamburg: Hamburger Edition.
- Roshal', L. 1928, *Bol'shevistskaia partiinost' i Trotskizm*. Moscow-Leningrad
- Roth, Joseph 1968, *Der stumme Prophet*, Hamburg: Rowohlt.
- Ryan, James 1988, 'Trotsky's Elbow', *Independent Magazine*, 10 December.
- Savel'ev, M. 1927, 'Lenin i Oktiabr'skoe vooruzhenie vosstanie', *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia*, 11, 28–33.
- Schapiro, Leonard 1970, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, 2nd edition, Norfolk: Methuen & Co. Ltd.
- Schlögel, Karl 1988, *Jenseits des Großen Oktober. Das Laboratorium der Moderne Petersburg 1909–1921*, Berlin: Siedler Verlag.
- Sed'maia (Aprel'skaia) Vserossiiskaia Konferentsiia RSDRP (Bol'shevikov). Protokoly* 1958, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- Sed'moi Ekstrennyi S'ezd RKP(b). Mart 1918 goda. Stenograficheskii otchet* 1962, Moscow: Gos. izd-vo politicheskoi literatury.
- Service, Robert 1979, *The Bolshevik Party in Revolution 1917–1923. A Study in Organisational Change*, London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd.
- 2008, 'The Way They Talked Then: The Discourse of Politics in the Soviet Party Politburo in the Late 1920s', in *The Lost Politburo Transcripts: From Collective Rule to*

- Stalin's Dictatorship*, edited by Paul R. Gregory and Norman Naimark, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- 2009, *Trotsky. A Biography*, Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press.
- Shandro, Alan 2013, 'Revolutionary Theory and Political Agency', *Science & Society*, 77, 3.
- Shatrov, Mikhail 1990, *The Bolsheviks and Other Plays*, London: Hern.
- et al. 2007, 'Dialogi ob Oktiabre', *Ekho planety*, 42, 2 November.
- Shumiatskii, B. 1919, *Chego khotiat bol'sheviki? (K programme partii)*, n.p., n.p.
- Skorkin, K.V. 2011, *Obrecheny proigrat': Vlast' i oppozitsiia 1922–1934*, Moscow: VividArt.
- Smolenskii, M. 1921, *Trotskii*, Berlin: Russkoe universal'noe izdatel'stvo.
- Solzhenitsyn, A.I. 1976, *Lenin in Zurich*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- 'Soobshchenie redaktsii gazety Pravda. 13 dekabria 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.
- Souvarine, Boris 2013, 'Letter to Leon Trotsky', in *Trotsky and His Critics*, London: Merlin Press.
- Stalin, J.V. 1924, *O Lenine i leninizme*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1953a, 'The Foundations of Leninism', *Works*, Vol. 6, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House
- 1953b, 'Trotskyism or Leninism?', *Works*, Vol. 6, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House.
- 1953c, 'The October Revolution and the Tactics of the Russian Communists', *Works*, Vol. 6, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House.
- 1955, 'Some Questions Concerning the History of Bolshevism', *Works*, Vol. 13, Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House.
- Steiner, George 1967, 'Trotsky and the Tragic Imagination', in *Language and Silence: Essays on Language, Literature, and the Inhuman*, New York: Atheneum.
- Stone, David R. 2003, 'The Prospect of War? Lev Trotskii, the Soviet Army, and the German Revolution in 1923', *The International History Review*, 25, 4.
- Sukhanov, N.N. 1922–3, *Zapiski o revoliutsii*, Berlin: Izd-vo Z.I. Grzhebina.
- 1984, *The Russian Revolution 1917. A Personal Record*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Swain, Geoffrey 2006, *Trotsky. Profiles in Power*, Harlow: Longman/Pearson.
- 2014, *Trotsky and the Russian Revolution*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Tchernychewsky, N.G. 1886, *What's To Be Done? A Romance*, Boston: Benj. R. Tucker.
- Thatcher, Ian D. 1994, 'First Russian Biographies of Trotsky: A Review Article', *Europe-Asia Studies* 46, 8.
- 2003, *Trotsky*, London: Routledge.
- Toker, Leona 2008, 'Making the Unthinkable Thinkable: Language Microhistory of Politburo Meetings', in *The Lost Politburo Transcripts: From Collective Rule to Stalin's Dictatorship*, edited by Paul R. Gregory and Norman Naimark, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

- Tosstorff, Reiner 2010, 'Trotzki-Biografien: Ein Streifzug', *Mittelweg* 36, 1.
- Trevelyan, G.M. 1923, *British History in the Nineteenth Century (1782–1901)*, London: Longmans, Green and Co.
- Trinadsataia konferentsiia Rossiiskoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii (bol'shevikov): biulleten' 1924, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Krasnaia nov'.
- Trinadtsati S'ezd Rossiiskoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii (Bol'shevikov). Stenograficheskii otchet. 23–31 maia 1924 g. 1924, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Krasnaia nov'.
- Trotskii, L. 1906, *Nasha revoliutsiia*, St. Petersburg; Paris.
- 1914, 'Bor'ba za edinstvo i marksistskii tsentr', *Bor'ba*, 7–8.
- 1922, 1905, 2nd edition, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1923a, *Kommunisticheskoe dvizhenie vo Frantsii: rechi, stat'i, pis'ma i dr. materialy*, Moscow: 'Moskovskii rabochii'.
- 1923b, *Voina i revoliutsiia. Krushenie Vtorogo Internatsionala i podgotovka tret'e-go*, 2nd edition, Vol. 1, Moscow-Petrograd: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1923c, *Voina i revoliutsiia. Krushenie Vtorogo Internatsionala i podgotovka tret'e-go*, 2nd ed., Vol. 2, Moscow-Petrograd: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924a, *O Lenine. Materialy dlia biografa*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924b, *Novyi kurs*, Moscow: 'Krasnaia nov'.
- 1924c, *Lecciones de Octubre*, Mexico: J. Pablos.
- 1924d, 'Uroki Oktiabria (vmesto vvedeniia)', in *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' I: 'Ot fevralia do oktiabria'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924e, 'Primechaniia', in *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' I: 'Ot fevralia do oktiabria'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924f, *Zapad i vostok. Voprosy mirovoi politiki i mirovoi revoliutsii*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Krasnaia nov'.
- 1924g, 'Kto izmenniki', in *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' I: 'Ot fevralia do oktiabria'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924h, 'Izbytok userdiia', *Bol'shevik*, 12–13.
- 1924i, 'Programma mira', in *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' I: 'Ot fevralia do oktiabria'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924j, 'Ot slov – k delu', in *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' I: 'Ot fevralia do oktiabria'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924k, *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' 2: 'Ot oktiabria do Bresta'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924l, 'Rech' na ekstrennom zasedanii Petrogradskogo Soveta po voprosu o Kronshtadte', in Trotskii 1924, 'Uroki Oktiabria (vmesto vvedeniia)', in *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' I: 'Ot fevralia do oktiabria'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924m, 'Prilozheniia', in *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' I: 'Ot fevralia do oktiabria'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.

- 1924n, '1905–1917 (Blizhaishie zadachi nyneshnei revoliutsii)', in *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' I: 'Ot fevralia do oktiabria'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924o, 'Narastaiushchii konflikt (vnutrennie sily russkoi revoliutsii)', in *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' I: 'Ot fevralia do oktiabria'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924p, 'Ot kogo i kak zashchishchat' revoliutsiiu', in *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' I: 'Ot fevralia do oktiabria'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924q, 'Voina i mir (Vnutrennie sily russkoi revoliutsii)', in *Sochineniia*, Vol. III: 1917. *Chast' I: 'Ot fevralia do oktiabria'*, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1925, *Gli Insegnamenti di Ottobre*, Milan: Istituto G.G. Feltrinelli.
- 1990, 'Nashi raznoglasiiia', *Arkhiv Trotskogo. Kommunisticheskaiia oppozitsiia v sssr, 1923–1927*, edited by Iu. Fel'shtinskii, Vol. 1, Moscow: "Terra" – "Terra".
- 1991, *Uroki Oktabria: s prilozheniem kriticheskikh materialov 1924 goda*, St. Petersburg: Lenizdat.
- 1994, *Dnevniki i pis'ma*, Moscow: Izd-vo gumanitarnoi lit-y.
- Trotsky o Lenine i Leninizme. *Sbornik materialov pod redakts. G. Safarova* 1925, Leningrad: Rabochee Izdatel'stvo 'Priboi'.
- Trotsky pered sudom Kommunisticheskoi Partii. *Otvety Trotskomu* 1925, Berlin: Berlinskoe kn-vo.
- Trotsky, Léon 1924, 'Les leçons d'Octobre', *Cahiers du bolchevisme: organe théorique du Parti Communiste Français*, 5, 19 December, and 6, 25 December.
- Trotsky, Leon 1925a, *The Lessons of October 1917*, trans. Susan Lawrence and I. Olshan, London: Labour Pub. Co.
- 1925b, *Poukrite ot Oktomvri* 1917, Granite City, IL: Bulgarski sots. rab. suiuz v Amerika.
- 1937, *The Stalin School of Falsification*, New York: Pioneer Publishers.
- 1938, 'Art and Politics in Our Epoch', *Partisan Review*, August–September.
- 1941a, *Stalin. An Appraisal of the Man and his Influence*, New York and London: Harper & Brothers.
- 1941b, 'The Curve of Capitalist Development', *Fourth International*, 2, 4.
- 1944, 'Engle's [sic] War Articles. Trotsky Reviews "The General's" Military Work', *The New International*, x, 5.
- 1945, *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, Vol. 1, New York: Pioneer Publishers.
- 1946, 'The Timetable for Revolution. Is It Possible to Fix a Definite Date for a Counter-Revolution or a Revolution? (January 1924)', *The New International*, 12, 8.
- 1953, *The First Five Years of the Communist International*, Vol. 2, New York: Pioneer Publishers.
- 1961, *Terrorism and Communism; A Reply to Karl Kautsky*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

- 1963, *Terrorism & Communism*, Ann Arbor, MI: Ann Arbor Paperback.
- 1965a, *The New Course and The Struggle for the New Course*, Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- 1965b, *The Permanent Revolution and Results and Prospects*, New York: Pioneer Publishers.
- 1965c, *Through What Stage Are We Passing? Speech at the 5th All-Union Congress of Medical and Veterinary Workers, June 21, 1924*, London: New Park Publications.
- 1968, *On the Road to the European Revolution*, London: Chelsea College Socialist Society.
- 1970a, *My Life: An Attempt at an Autobiography*, New York: Pathfinder Press.
- 1970b, *Problems of Civil War*, New York: Pathfinder Press.
- 1971, *Lenin. Notes for a Biographer*, New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.
- 1972a, *The Revolution Betrayed. What is the Soviet Union and Where is It Going?*, New York: Pathfinder Press.
- 1972b, 1905, New York: Vintage Books.
- 1973a, *Perspectives and Tasks in the East. Speech on the Third Anniversary of the Communist University for Toilers of the East, April 21, 1924*, London: New Park Publications.
- 1973b, *May Day in the West and the East: On the 35th Anniversary of the May Day Holiday: Speech at the Commemorative Plenum of the Moscow Soviet, April 25, 1924*, London: New Park Publications.
- 1975, *The Challenge of the Left Opposition (1923–25)*, edited by Naomi Allen, New York: Pathfinder Press.
- 1977, *Portraits. Political & Personal*, New York: Pathfinder Press.
- 1979, *How the Revolution Armed*, Vol. 1: *The Year 1918*, London: New Park Publications.
- 1980a, *Report of the Siberian Delegation*, London: New Park Publications
- 1980b, *Our Political Tasks (1904)*, London: New Park Publications.
- 1987, *The Lessons of October*, London: Bookmarks
- 2005, *Literature and Revolution*, Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books.
- The Trotsky Reappraisal* 1992, edited by Terry Brotherstone and Paul Dukes, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Trotsky, L. 1923, 'Kann man eine Konterrevolution oder eine Revolution auf einen bestimmten Zeitpunkt ansetzen?', *Internationale Presse-Korrespondenz*, 111, 152, 26 September 1923.
- 1925, 1917: *Die Lehren der Revolution*, Berlin: E. Laub'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung.
- Trotsky, L. 1918a, *Our Revolution. Essays on Working-Class and International Revolution, 1904–1917*, New York: Henry Holt and Company.
- 1918b, *What is a Peace Program?* Petrograd: Labour Party Information Bureau.

- 1925, 'The Lessons of October', *International Press Correspondence*, 5, 16, 26 February.
- Tumarkin, Nina 1983, *Lenin Lives! The Lenin Cult in Soviet Russia*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Tych, Feliks 1996, 'The КРД-КРР Political "Axis" Against Zinov'ev-Stalin in the Communist International 1919–1924', in *Centre and Periphery. The History of the Comintern in the Light of New Documents*, edited by Jürgen Rojahn and Mikhail Narinsky, Amsterdam: International Institute of Social History.
- Um den Oktober* 1925, Hamburg: Verlag Carl Hoym Nachf.
- Ustinov, G. 1920, *Tribun revoliutsii (L. D. Trotskii)*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Dennitsa'.
- 'V.A. Elagin – TsK RKP(b). 15 noiabria 1924 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 7.
- Vasetskii, Nikolai 1989, *Likvidatsiia. Stalin, Trotskii, Zinov'ev. Fragmenty politicheskikh sudeb*, Moscow: Moskovskii rabochii.
- 1992, *Trotskii: opyt polit. biografii*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Respublika'.
- 'V.I. Lenin – G.V. Plekhanovu. 2.III.03' 1925, *Leninskii sbornik*, Vol. IV, Moscow-Leningrad.
- Vilkova, V.P. 1996, *The Struggle for Power: Russia in 1923*, Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.
- 'Vnutripartiinye diskussii 20-kh godov. Pis'mo L. D. Trotskogo chlenam TsK i TsKK RKP(b). 8 oktiabria 1923 g.' 1990, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 5.
- Volkogonov, D.A. 1988, 'Triumf i tragediia. Politicheskii portret I.V. Stalina', *Oktiabr*, 10.
- 1996, *Trotsky: The Eternal Revolutionary*, New York: The Free Press.
- Walker, Barbara 2002, 'Kruzhok Culture: The Meaning of Patronage in the Early Soviet Literary World', *Contemporary European History*, 11, 1.
- Warth, Robert D. 1967, 'On the Historiography of the Russian Revolution', *Slavic Review* 26, 2.
- Wheeler-Bennett, John W. 1956, *Brest-Litovsk: The Forgotten Peace. March, 1918*, London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd.
- White, Hayden 1987, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Williams, Albert Rhys 1921, *Through the Russian Revolution*, New York: Boni and Liveright.
- Wilcox, E.H. 1919, *Russia's Ruin*, London: Chappell & Hall.
- Wilton, Robert 1919, *Russia's Agony*, New York: E.P. Dutton & Company.
- Wood, Elizabeth A. 2005, *Performing Justice: Agitation Trials in Early Soviet Russia*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Wright, Patrick 1985, *On Living in an Old Country: The National Past in Contemporary Britain*, London: Verso.
- 'Zakrytoe pis'mo aprel'skogo (1925 g.) plenuma TsK RKP(b) mestnym partiinym organizatsiiam. 26 apreliia 1925 g.' 1991, *Izvestiia TsK KPSS*, 8.

- Za Leninizm, protiv Trotskizma (po povodu 'Urokov Okt.' tov. Trotskogo)* 1925, Perm': n.p.
- Za Leninizm. Sbornik statei* 1925, Moscow-Leningrad: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- Zalutskii, P. 1925, *O sovremennom Trotskizme*, Leningrad: Rabochee Izdatel'stvo 'Priboi'.
- Zelenov, M.V. 2004, Kak Stalin kritikoval i redaktiroval konspekty shkol'nykh uchebnikov po istorii (1934–1936 gg.), *Voprosy istorii*, 6.
- Zinov'ev, G.E. and V.I. Lenin 1915, *Sotsializm i voina: otnoshenie R.S.-D.R.P. k voine*, Geneva: Impr. Chaulmontet.
- Zinov'ev, G. 1918a, *Chego khotiat sotsial-demokraty bol'sheviki? (V voprosakh i otvetakh)*, Moscow: n.p.
- 1918b, *Protiv techniia: sbornik statei iz 'Sotsialdemokrata', 'Kommunista' i 'Sbornik sotsialdemokrata'*, Petrograd: Izd. Petrogradskogo soveta rabochikh i soldatskikh deputatov.
- 1923a, *Istoriia Rossiiskoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii (bol'shevikov): Populiarnyi ocherk*, Moscow and Petrograd: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1923b, *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional za rabotoi. Takticheskie problemy Kominterna i rabota ego seksii. Rechi, proiznesennye na IV Vsemirnom Kongresse Kominterna*, 2nd edition, Moscow-Petrograd: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- 1924a, *Sud"by nashei partii*, Moscow: Izdatel'stvo 'Krasnaia nov'.
- 1924b, *Istoriia Rossiiskoi Kommunisticheskoi Partii (bol'shevikov): Populiarnyi ocherk*, Moscow and Petrograd: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo.
- Zinoviev, G.E., I. Stalin and L. Kamenev 1925, *Leninism or Trotskyism*, Chicago, IL: Daily Worker Publishing Co.
- 1972, *Socialism and War (The Attitude of the R.S.D.L.P. towards the War)*, Moscow: Progress Publishers.
- Zinoviyev, Grigory 1973, *History of the Bolshevik Party: A Popular Outline*, London: New Park Publications.
- Zoshchenko, Mikhail 2000, *The Galosh and Other Stories*, London: Angel Books.
- Zwengel, Ralf and Markus Wehner 1993, 'Trotsky's Difficult Return: The Soviet Historical and Political Discussion Surrounding L.D. Trotsky', *Journal of Trotsky Studies*, 1.

Index

(italics refer to a designated entry in the glossary)

- Agitation trials 37
- Agrarian Union 160, 471, 472, 473, 477, 703, 780
- Aleksinskii, Grigorii 207, 223, 223n51, 703–4
- 'All Power to the Soviets' 102, 123, 184, 326, 453–4, 720, 723, 736, 775
 - Lenin on 307, 611–12, 616
- All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions (VTsSPS) 7, 199n1, 260, 714–15, 753, 790
- American Red Cross 2
- American Socialist Workers' Party xiii, 780
- Andreev, Andrei 27, 38, 59–60, 81, 704
 - on the Bolshevik Party 577–8, 579–80
 - on Bolshevism 577, 581
 - on the Comintern 578
 - on disagreements within the party 578–9
 - on the Emigration 57
 - on Leninism 581
 - on the October insurrection 576
 - on Trotskyism 577
 - on Trotsky's mistakes 576–7, 580–1
 - contribution to polemic: 'Not Every Effort is Successful'* 576–81
- April Theses 73, 96, 189–90, 196, 238, 242, 266–7, 290, 523, 541–2, 611–12, 633, 635, 664, 705, 767, 775
- Aurora xv, 678, 679, 705
- Avanti (Forwards) 591, 706, 707, 709, 780
- Averbakh, Leopold 8, 481–4, 706
 - death of 81
 - contribution to polemic: 'Letter to Comrades'* 481–4
- Avilov, Nikolai 101n13, 349, 706–7
- Axelrod, Pavel 78, 203, 204, 207, 217, 337, 340, 499, 504, 505, 507, 574, 707, 726, 728, 735, 758, 760, 791
- Babakhan, N. 8, 188n1, 189n3, 192n7, 195n17, 707
 - on the Bolshevik Party 193
 - on Bolshevism 189, 189n3, 193
 - on dual power 190
 - on the mistakes of Zinoviev and Kamenev 192–3
 - on the February Revolution 189–91, 196
 - on insurrection as an 'art' 195
 - on Marxism 189, 196
 - on the October insurrection 194–7
 - on Trotsky's distortion of Lenin's role 194–6
 - on Trotsky's mistakes 189–91
 - contribution to polemic: 'On Comrade Trotsky's "The Lessons of October"'* 188–98
- Babel, Isaak 4
- Balabanova, Angelica 250, 591, 707
- Baldwin, Stanley 341, 708
- Balkan Communist Conference 468
- Bebel, August xv, 642, 708
- Bernstein, Eduard xv, 334, 348, 642, 655, 708, 722, 754, 765, 770
 - Bernsteinism and Bernsteinians xv, 334, 683, 708, 757, 770
- Bissolati, Leonida 347, 348n45, 709
- Black Hundreds 29, 139, 140, 216, 344, 497, 709, 711, 756
- Blagoev, Dimitar 472–3, 709, 713
- Blanqui, Louis Auguste xv, 709–10
 - Blanquism and Blanquists 100, 172, 173, 177, 178, 179, 180, 212, 281, 607, 609, 655, 664
 - Leninism and Blanquism 301–4, 615–16
 - Marxism and Blanquism 613–14
- Bogdat'ev, Sarkis 180, 345, 673, 710
- Bokii, Gleb 674, 710
- Bol'shevik (Bolshevik)* 8, 387, 408, 411, 412, 414, 710, 713, 799
- Bolshevism 9, 10, 12, 18–19, 24, 28–9, 32, 33–4, 41, 63, 67, 70, 73, 76, 78, 167, 168, 424, 587, 588, 589, 592, 728, 736, 761
 - Andreev on 577, 581
 - Averbakh on 482, 484
 - Babakhan on 189, 189n3, 193
 - Bubnov on 649, 652, 653, 654, 656, 657–8, 659, 660, 667, 668, 670, 671, 680

- contribution to polemic: "The Lessons of October" and Trotskyism'*
647–80
- Bukharin on 147, 151, 155, 156, 157, 158, 516, 522–4, 530, 537, 538, 539n27, 540, 541, 545
- Kamenev on 199, 200–3, 205, 208, 211–15, 217, 219, 221, 225, 226, 227–8, 230–7, 241, 243–4, 249–50, 252, 257, 258
- Kanatchikov on 681, 682
- Kautsky on 696, 698, 699, 702
- Kolarov on 465–6
- Kun on 619–25, 627, 630, 631, 635–7, 646
- Lebed' on 169, 171, 172
- Molotov on 398, 402, 404, 414–15, 419
- Rykov on 570, 572n7, 575
- Safarov on 488, 489, 490, 492, 495, 498, 500, 501, 502, 504, 506, 512
- Sokol'nikov on 180, 185
- Stalin on 262, 266, 279, 280, 282, 434, 437
- Trotsky on 93, 95–6, 97, 110, 136, 284, 286–90, 296, 300, 582
- Zinoviev on 322–64
- Bolshevisation 26, 53, 61, 136, 147, 149, 150, 154, 363, 368, 429, 465, 484, 592, 719, 733
- Old Bolsheviks 10, 12, 19, 42, 49, 94, 134, 240, 241, 262, 298, 318, 361, 399–40, 401, 402, 487, 671, 700, 705, 706, 712, 738, 744, 760, 763, 777, 790, 799
- Bor'ba (Struggle)* 491, 494, 505, 624, 642, 657, 711, 774
- Bordiga, Amadeo xv, 369n18, 711
- Boulanger, Georges 497, 711
- Boulangisme* 497, 656, 711
- Bourgeois specialists (*spetsy*) 43, 317, 354, 359, 711
- Boycottists (*boikotisty*) 685, 711, 749
- Brandenberger, David 76, 77–8
- Brandler, Heinrich 369, 370, 371, 374, 374n31, 376, 377–8, 379, 380, 620, 639, 640, 704, 711, 730
- Brest-Litovsk, Treaty of 19, 50, 112, 151, 167, 257, 317–18, 333n20, 333n21, 371, 386, 396–7, 408–9, 410, 417, 429, 485, 520, 521, 558, 564, 570, 577, 587, 619, 630–1, 631n18, 636, 646, 686, 713, 753, 761, 782, 783, 784, 790–1, 792
- The Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk* (1962) 83
- British Labour Party xiii, 317, 712, 755
- Brotsky, Isaak 4, 712
- Brooks, Jeffrey 36
- Broué, Pierre 67
- Bubnov, Andrei 7, 27, 38, 60, 73, 75–6, 261, 263, 325, 674, 712, 764
- arrest and execution of 81
- on Bolshevism 649, 652, 653, 654, 656, 657–8, 659, 660, 667, 668, 670, 671, 680
- on disagreements in the party 647–50, 659, 671–5
- on the February Revolution 651–2, 658, 664, 666
- on Marxism 650, 654–5, 656, 661, 666, 667, 669
- on Menshevism 654, 656–7, 660
- on the *mezhraintsy* 658
- on the mistakes of Zinoviev and Kamenev 648–9
- on the October insurrection 663, 664, 669, 675–80
- on Leninism 653, 655, 669
- on permanent revolution 651, 652–3, 664–6, 666–7, 670
- on Trotskyism 76, 653, 660–3, 670
- contribution to polemic: "The Lessons of October" and Trotskyism'* 647–80
- Bukharin, Nikolai xiv, 7, 10, 27, 34, 57, 60, 64, 66, 81–2, 170, 200, 316, 374, 374n31, 389, 710, 712–13, 733, 750, 764, 779, 782, 786, 790, 794, 795, 798
- on Bolshevisation 147, 149, 150, 554, 733
- on Bolshevism 147, 151, 155, 156, 157, 158, 516, 522–4, 530, 537, 538, 539n27, 540, 541, 545
- on Brest-Litovsk, Treaty of 151, 520, 564
- Bukharinites 78
- on civil war 155
- and the Comintern 159–62, 468
- on defeatism 155–6, 157
- on disagreements in the Bolshevik Party 22, 50, 58, 67, 147, 515, 516, 556–7, 562–4, 566–9
- on the February Revolution 546
- as Left Communist 520–1, 521n4, 764
- on Leninism 149, 516–22

- on Lenin's Testament 555–6, 558, 559, 565
- on Marxism 148, 152, 516, 517, 518, 522, 526, 526n11, 527, 547, 550, 552
- on the *mezhraiontsy* 156n17
- on the mistakes of Trotsky 157, 516, 518–22, 534–5, 540–1, 560
- on the mistakes of Zinoviev and Kamenev 151–2, 155
- on the October insurrection 150–1, 151–4, 537
- on permanent revolution 28, 29–30, 157–8, 514, 522–9, 531–3, 537, 544
- on revolution in Bulgaria 159–60, 162
- on revolution in Germany 159, 160–2
- trial and execution 80, 782
- on Trotskyism 65, 516–22, 560–2
- and 'Vardinism' 794
- and the Zimmerwald Left 157
- contribution to polemic: 'How the History of October Must Not Be Written (On L. Trotsky's Book 1917)'* 147–62
- 'To All the Members of the Central Committee Who Are Enemies of Trotskyism' 34, 555–69
- 'The Theory of Permanent Revolution' 514–54
- Bulgakov, Mikhail 78
- Bulgakov, Sergei 683, 713, 749
- Bulgaria, September Antifascist Uprising of 1923 8, 16–17, 24–5, 45–6, 87, 89, 136, 159–60, 162, 374, 380, 464, 467, 468–80, 589, 648, 703, 709, 737, 741, 779–80
- Bulgarian Communist Party (БКР) 17, 25, 46, 160, 464–80, 703, 709, 713, 737, 780
- Bund 206, 504, 714, 752, 796
- Bundists 339
- Carr, E.H. 13, 49, 65
- Central Control Commission (CCC) 44, 48, 60, 556, 562, 572, 586–94, 714, 734, 779, 797
- Chamberlain, Neville 341, 715
- Change of Signposts movement (Smenovek-hovtsy)* 359, 715
- Chaplin, Nikolai 8, 163n1, 715
- execution of 81
- contribution to polemic: 'The Komsomol and October (On Comrade Trotsky's "The Lessons of October")'* 163–8
- 'Cheliabinsk populists' 507, 508, 511, 512
- Chernov, Viktor 106, 137, 138, 203, 416, 416n82, 450, 507, 547n46, 669, 716, 720, 783
- Chernyshevsky, Nikolai xv, 396, 699, 716, 766
- Chkheidze, N.S. 143, 144, 156, 219, 223, 337, 504, 505, 506, 512, 717, 720
- letter from Trotsky to 21, 212n17, 276, 277, 285–6, 421–3, 425, 501, 619, 657n37, 659
- contribution to polemic: *The Chkheidze Controversy* 421–6
- Churchill, Winston 82
- Civil War 15, 42, 65, 74, 75, 85, 114, 128–9, 133, 150, 247, 267n9, 313, 327, 356, 532, 587, 607, 686
- Trotsky's role in 2–3, 58, 66, 70, 79, 83
- Clausewitz, Carl von 626
- Comintern (Communist International, also Third International) 8, 36, 65, 81, 105n19, 157, 168, 199, 223, 224, 229–30, 291, 347, 376, 382, 392, 398, 496, 504, 507, 591, 690, 717–18, 750, 755, 760, 771, 792, 798
- on bolshevizing the Comintern 136, 368, 592, 719, 733
- Executive Committee (ECCI) of 4, 7, 24, 45–6, 704, 707, 713, 734, 741, 744, 747, 771, 773, 777, 799
- expulsion of Bukharin from 713
- expulsion of Trotsky from 792
- expulsion of Zinoviev from 68, 799
- and the failed revolutions in Bulgaria and Germany 24, 24–5, 45–7, 53–4, 159–62, 345n42, 358, 365, 369, 372–3, 375, 383–6, 464–8, 475–80, 589–90, 648
- and RKP(b) influence in 53, 199–200, 465–6
- Trotsky's representations of 19, 24, 46, 147, 159–62
- Comintern Congresses 437, 491n21, 737
- Third (1921) 302–3, 311, 408, 717–18, 728, 733, 744, 785, 789
- Fourth (1922) 3, 18, 128, 323–4, 332, 639, 718, 727, 728, 780
- Fifth (1924) 163, 590, 727, 728, 733
- Committees of the Village Poor 717, 245, 545

- The Communist Manifesto* 695, 698
- Communist Party of Bulgaria (БКР) 17, 25,
160, 464–80, 703, 709, 713
- Communist Party of Germany (KPD) 24, 25,
45, 113, 166, 290, 312, 358, 370, 375, 381,
434, 690, 693, 704, 718, 732, 752, 754–5
- Communist Party of Poland (KPP) 45, 81,
718–19
- Communist Party of the Ukraine (KPU) 7, 61
- Conference of United SDS 156
- Congress of Soviets 719
First (1917) 137, 596, 601
Second (1917) 15, 152n9, 172, 245, 251n89,
271, 303, 326, 327, 605, 608, 612, 675,
785
Second Congress as 'legal cover' for the
insurrection 120–5
- Constituent Assembly 42, 102, 107, 110–11,
117, 119–20, 125, 152n9, 166, 172n8, 185,
193, 256, 280, 300, 305–8, 325, 331, 345,
345n41, 401, 455–8, 509, 599–600, 660,
716, 717, 720, 721, 723, 724, 748, 770
- Contact Commission 265, 269, 720
- Council of Labour and Defence (STO) 571,
583, 721, 738
- Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom)
1, 7, 117, 118, 122, 194, 271, 330, 345n41,
571, 716, 720, 735, 738, 745, 750, 760, 777,
785
- Cuno, Wilhelm 26, 374, 375, 640, 721, 730
- Cunow, Heinrich 503, 534, 721, 757, 762
- Daian, G. 388, 389, 394, 399, 722
- Dan, Fedor xv, 55, 125, 137, 203, 204, 206,
212, 217, 219, 226, 301, 315, 416, 482, 502,
503n66, 574, 605, 722, 752, 758, 760, 761,
771, 784
and the Liberdans and Liberdanism xv,
225, 450, 722, 752
- Daniels, R.V. 9
- Danton, Georges 3
- Dawn of Freedom (Zaria svobody)* 678, 798
- Declaration of the 46 48, 571–2, 712, 722
- Defeatism, Revolutionary (*revoliutsionnoe porazhenchestvo*) 155–6, 157, 228, 229,
512, 658, 722, 773
- Defencism (*oboronestvo*) 13, 94, 97–100,
101, 104, 107, 156, 178, 223, 239, 265, 266,
269, 270, 271, 289, 327, 350, 401, 502, 543,
686, 705, 722, 723, 731, 736, 758, 767, 769,
773, 783, 790
- Democratic Centralists 42, 712, 764
- Democratic Conference 96, 104, 107–9, 120,
124, 164, 180–3, 255, 271, 301, 346, 704,
721, 723, 757
- Den' (Day)* 178, 180, 346, 723
- Deutscher, Isaac 36, 80, 82, 772
- Dimitrov, Georgi 46, 741, 780
- Dual power (*dvoevlastie*) 92, 123, 190, 197,
265, 269, 303–4, 306, 307, 454, 546, 724,
737, 770, 785
- Dubrovinskii, I.F. 349, 724
- Dzerzhinsky, Felix 261, 263, 674, 716, 725
funeral of 67
- Eastman, Max 66, 725
- Economism 96, 220, 225, 503, 638, 661–2,
662n47, 683–4, 683n3, 726, 757, 770
- Elagin, V.A. 58
- Emancipation of Labour Group (*Gruppa 'Osvobozhdenie Truda'*) 91, 297, 707, 726
- Engels, Friedrich 106, 133n51, 195, 290, 400,
568, 626, 696, 697, 697n6, 698, 739, 757,
796
- Esenin, Sergei 4
- Eteocles 82
- Europeanism 217–18, 531
- Falsification of photographs 3–4, 79, 80,
84
- Finland, civil war in 385–6, 727
- Finland Station xv, 678, 727, 779
Lenin's speech at 100, 177
- Fischer, Ruth 53, 377, 378, 381, 691, 727–
8
- Fonvizin, Denis 505n71
- Frossard, Louis-Olivier xv, 250, 728
- Frunze, Mikhail 65
Frunze Military Academy 794
- Gatchina 3, 680
renamed as Trotsk 4
- Georgian Affair (1922) 43, 556, 729
- Girchak, E. 68
- Glazman, Mikhail 41, 138, 730
- Glasnost'* 4, 82, 84
- God-constructivists (*bogostroiteli*) 685,
749

- God-seekers (*bogoiskateli*) 685, 749
 Gol'denberg, I.P. 349, 350, 706, 731
Golos (Voice) 506, 760
 Golos Group 208, 209, 214
 Gorbachev, Mikhail 84
 Gorham, Michael 79
 Gorky, M. 390n13, 731, 749, 762, 788
 Gosizdat (State Publishing House) 4, 5, 726
 Gosplan (State Planning Commission) 43,
 317, 746, 747, 753, 767, 784, 787
 Grumbach, Salomon 591, 732
- Halfin, Igal 65
 Heer, Nancy Whittier 83
 Hilferding, Rudolf 111, 166, 193, 256–7, 305,
 306, 345, 508, 723, 732
 Hilferdingism and Hilferdingists xv, 257,
 266n4, 457, 511, 512, 547, 669, 732
The History of the All-Union Communist Party
 (*Bolsheviks*) *Short Course* 77–9, 734
 Hitchens, Christopher 82
 Hobson, John 224, 733
 Höglund, Karl 591, 733
 ‘Homogeneous’ socialist government’ 96,
 733
 Hula 620, 733
 Hungarian Soviet Republic (1919) 8, 131–2,
 734, 747
 Huysmans, Jean 470, 491, 492, 734
- Iaroslavskii, Emel'ian 13, 71, 734
 on the mistakes of Zinoviev and Kamenev
 75
 and party histories 75–6
Inprecorr 6
 Insurrection as an art 17, 120, 129, 183n16,
 195, 253, 275, 614, 617, 698
 Interdistrict Organisation of the RSDRP
 (*mezhrayontsy*) 11, 78, 137, 156, 157, 289,
 658, 714, 733, 754, 759, 774, 775, 792, 793,
 795
Iskra (Spark) 3, 20, 203, 219–20, 412, 413, 426,
 498, 526n11, 661–2, 683, 684, 707, 726,
 735, 744, 756, 762, 767, 769, 787
 Iskraists 3, 220, 413, 661–2, 735
 Lenin and 750
 Trotsky and 791
 Istpart 7, 44, 54–5, 61, 70, 73, 170, 735–6, 739,
 762, 763, 767
- Italian Socialist Party 346, 347, 706, 707, 711,
 780, 789, 793
 Iudenich, Nikolai General 4, 736, 739
 Ivanovich, St. 315, 736
 Ivanovo-Voznesensk 253, 675, 676, 768
Izvestiia (News) xiii, 5, 22, 37, 43, 50, 61, 584,
 596, 713, 736, 769, 782
- Jacobins and Jacobinism 495–6, 497, 499,
 655, 684, 736
 July Days 15, 63, 92, 96, 105, 108, 116, 129, 153,
 156n17, 289, 346, 589, 647, 710, 736–7,
 759, 769, 775, 792
 Kabakchiev, Khristo 473, 737
 Kadets (Constitutional Democrats) 31, 104,
 137, 219, 451, 454, 498, 500, 607, 715,
 737–8, 755, 758, 759, 770
 ‘Black Hundred-Kadet bastards’ 29, 139
 in the Constituent Assembly 720
 Left Kadets 169
 Kaledin, Aleksei 117, 738
 Kalinin, Mikhail 194, 263, 674, 738
 Kamenev, Lev 1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 27, 29, 43, 51, 53,
 56, 59, 61, 65, 67, 68, 76, 94, 100, 106, 108,
 185, 194, 268, 290, 658, 659, 738–9
 in alliance with Zinoviev and Stalin 51–2,
 53, 56, 66, 80, 738–9, 776, 786
 arrest and execution of 80
 on Bolshevism 199, 200–3, 205, 208,
 211–15, 217, 219, 221, 225, 226, 227–8,
 230–7, 241, 243–4, 249–50, 252, 257, 258,
 555
 on disagreements in the party 200, 207,
 230
 expulsion from Politburo 68
 on the First World War 221–6, 228,
 228n61, 229
 mistakes of 11–13, 16, 18, 67, 68, 80, 165,
 192, 192n17, 249–52, 261–2, 264, 296–8,
 323n2, 648
 on Leninism 257–9
 on Marxism 205, 208, 213, 219–20, 222,
 226, 239–40, 245
 on trial 80
 on the October insurrection 58, 75, 108,
 110, 116–17
 on permanent revolution, theory of
 29–30, 204–5, 215, 218, 220, 229–30, 232,
 234–5, 241, 243–5

- on the revolution of 1905 205–6, 207, 213,
214–15, 222, 225, 230–2, 233, 237
- on Trotskyism 20–21, 32–3, 65, 72, 257–9,
199–259
- on Trotsky mistakes 22, 228, 242
- contribution to polemic: 'Trotskyism or
Leninism?' 199–259*
- Kanatchikov, Semen 7, 739
- arrest and execution of 81
- on Bolshevism 681, 682
- on Marxism 681–3, 686
- contribution to polemic: 'The Struggle for
the Party' 61–2, 681–8*
- Kartashev, Anton 125, 739
- Kautsky, Karl xiv, 56, 97, 223, 338, 340, 348,
421, 424, 491, 501, 502, 502n61, 503, 508,
512, 547, 642, 669, 724, 739–40, 752, 754,
762
- on Bolshevism 696, 698, 699, 702
- Kautskyists 222, 224, 145, 230, 335, 339,
511, 707, 740
- Kautskyanism 30, 225, 145, 492, 502, 506,
512, 740
- 'Kautskyan swamp' 28, 511, 740
- contribution to polemic: 'The Lessons of the
October Experiment' 696–702*
- Kerensky, Alexander 107, 122, 123, 125, 126,
160, 181, 183, 184, 268, 270, 273, 301, 476,
601, 611, 612, 677, 679, 680, 716, 723, 737,
738, 740, 743, 755, 770, 783
- Kerenshchina* (Kerensky Era) 123, 197,
318, 452, 740
- on transfer of Petrograd garrison to front
15, 303–4, 406
- Khrushchev, Nikita 77, 81, 754
- Kienthal Conference 507, 740–1, 748, 761
- Kirov, Sergei 13, 81, 741, 783
- assassination of 739, 778, 782
- Kolarov, Vasilii 8, 24–5, 46, 81, 709, 741, 780
- on Bolshevism 465–6
- and the Comintern 464, 466, 475–80
- death of 741
- and the failed revolutions in Bulgaria and
Germany 464, 467–75
- contribution to polemic: 'The Lessons
of October' and the Bulgarian
Communist Party' 464–80*
- Kolchak, Aleksandr 267n9, 741–2
- Kollontai, Alexandra 142, 261, 742, 764
- Komsomol (Communist Youth League) 7,
9, 17–18, 19, 481, 484, 706, 708, 715, 726,
742
- on the mistakes of Zinoviev and Kamenev
165–6
- on the October insurrection 163–8
- on Trotsky's mistakes 19, 22, 61, 163–8
- Kornilov, Lavr 23, 126, 160, 164, 268, 476, 743
- Kornilovites 113, 367, 612
- Kornilovshchina* (*Kornilov Affair or Revolt*)
96, 104–7, 114, 116, 129–30, 160, 184, 185,
197, 268, 270, 271, 272, 274, 323, 325, 414,
449, 452, 454, 476, 704, 723, 733, 740, 743,
745, 770, 778, 795
- Kotkin, Stephen 67
- Krasnaia molodezh' (Red Youth) 139n1, 743*
- Krasnaia niva (Red Cornfield) 2, 743*
- Krasnaia nov' (Red Virgin Soil) 388, 394, 722,
744*
- Kreibich, Karel 620, 744
- Kronstadt xv, 247, 346, 564, 596, 606, 678,
720, 744, 761, 798
- Kronstadters 100
- Krupskaia, Nadezhda 7, 27, 38, 59, 60, 81,
744–5, 750
- on the composition of the party 427,
430–1
- on John Reed 430
- on Marxism 428
- on Trotsky's mistakes 430
- contribution to polemic, 'The Question of
the Lessons of October' 427–31*
- Kruzhinov, V.M. 60
- Kruzhkovshchina* (circle spirit or cliquishness)
36, 55, 137, 156, 493, 506, 745
- kruzhki* (circles) 14, 103, 137, 421
- sectarianism 20, 36, 150, 212, 213, 217, 226,
354, 361, 470, 487, 698, 745
- Krylenko, Nikolai 263, 674, 725, 745
- Krymov, Aleksandr 179n6, 745
- Kuibyshev, Valerian 746
- death of 80
- Kugelmann, Ludwig 458
- Kun, Béla 8, 19, 25, 429–30, 746–7
- arrest and execution of 81
- on Bolshevism 619–25, 627, 630, 631,
635–7, 646
- on Brest-Litovsk, Treaty of 630–1
- and the Comintern 639–40

- and the failed revolution in Germany 639–40
- and the Hungarian Revolution 734
- on Leninism 32, 619–23, 634–7, 641
- on Marxism 624–7, 634–5, 637, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646
- on permanent revolution 27–30, 628, 629n16, 631–2, 633
- on Trotskyism 32, 39–40, 57, 619–23, 626–8, 634–7, 641, 646
- on Trotsky's mistakes 25–6, 621–2
- contribution to polemic: 'The Ideological Foundations of Trotskyism'* 619–46
- Kuusinen, Otto 8, 25–6, 27, 38, 39, 40, 59, 60, 81, 747
- on Brest-Litovsk, Treaty of 317–18
- on civil war in Finland 385–6
- and the Comintern 369, 376
- on the failed revolution in Germany 345, 345n42, 365–86
- on Zinoviev's mistakes 376–7
- contribution to polemic: 'An Unsuccessful Depiction of the 'German October' (Comrade Trotsky's "The Lessons of October")'* 365–86
- Kviring, Emmanuil 7, 21, 38, 57, 64, 283n1, 747
- arrest and execution of 81
- on Marxism 612, 613, 614, 616
- on Trotsky's mistakes 608–10, 618
- on the October insurrection 607–8, 609–18
- contribution to polemic: 'Lenin, Conspiracy, October'* 607–18
- Latsis, Martyn 263, 748
- Lawrence, Susan xiii
- League of Nations 508, 511–12, 765
- Lebed', Dmitrii 7, 748
- arrest and execution 81
- on Bolshevism 169, 171, 172
- on Marxism 169, 173
- on the October insurrection 171–4
- on Trotsky's mistakes 170, 174
- contribution to polemic: 'On the Intolerable Distortion of Historical Facts'* 169–75
- Ledebour, Georg 97, 748–9
- Left Communists 42, 310, 371, 397, 520, 521, 521n4, 631, 686–7, 710, 711, 734, 753, 763–4, 782
- Left Deviations 719, 749
- Left Opposition 52, 67, 373, 374, 772, 776
- Left Populists (*Levye narodniki*) 94
- Left SRS 150, 245, 263–4, 327, 328, 330, 331–2, 527, 544–5, 720, 733, 761, 783, 786
- Legal Marxists 682–3, 713, 757, 794
- Legin, Karl 470, 750
- Lena massacre 215–17, 218, 750
- Lenin, Vladimir 1–2, 3, 4, 750
- and 'All Power to the Soviets' 307, 611–12, 616
- April Theses 73, 96, 189–90, 196, 238, 242, 266–7, 290, 523, 541–2, 611–12, 633, 635, 664, 705, 767, 775
- at the Finland Station 96, 99, 100, 177, 727, 779
- in hiding in Finland 15, 301, 304, 737
- as 'The Incorruptible' 3
- and insurrection as an art 17, 120, 129, 183n16, 195, 253, 275, 614, 617, 698
- on Marxism 10, 99, 120, 133, 183n16, 208, 750
- his Testament 13, 34, 43, 66, 67, 68, 555, 556, 558–9, 565, 750
- Leninism, Andreev on 581
- Bubnov on 653, 655, 669
- Bukharin on 149, 516–22
- Kamenev on 257–9
- Kun on 32, 619–23, 634–7, 641
- Molotov on 392–3, 395n35, 400, 412–20
- Stalin on 260–82
- Trotsky on 301–4
- Zinoviev on 334–45
- Lenin Levy 53, 55, 60, 62, 74, 353, 354, 402, 418, 427, 563, 566, 588, 592, 751, 775
- Lentsner, Navum 138, 155, 157, 262, 267, 272–3, 344, 751
- Levi, Paul xiv, 56, 250, 382, 591, 718, 751, 752
- contribution to polemic: 'Introduction' to "The Lessons of October"* 689–95
- Levitskii, Konstantin 217, 751
- Lévy, Roger 2
- Liber, Mark 722, 752
- and the Liberdans and Liberdanism xv, 225, 450, 722, 752

- Liebknecht, Karl 502, 718, 751, 752, 754, 755,
762, 798
assassination of 752, 755, 757
- Linde, Fedor 180, 752
- Liquidators and liquidationism 8, 30, 93,
193, 205–7, 210, 218, 220, 225, 248, 340,
422, 489–92, 500–5, 512, 574, 624, 645–6,
656–7, 660–61, 662, 685, 729, 753, 758,
761, 770, 800
- Lomov, Georgii 261, 753
- Longuet, Jean 97, 223, 547n46, 669, 728, 753
Longuetists 728
- Lozovskii, A. 118, 753–4
- Luch (Beam)* 421, 422–3, 425, 771
- Lunacharsky, Anatolii 2, 785, 57–8, 686, 743,
749, 754, 785
- Luxemburg, Rosa 158, 214, 220, 299, 338, 425,
447, 448, 502, 621, 642, 662, 751, 752,
754–5, 757, 762, 798
in the KPD 711, 718
assassination of 751, 755
- Lvov, Prince Georgii 542, 601, 716, 737, 755,
760, 770
- MacDonald, Ramsay 97, 354, 508, 511, 547,
669, 712, 755
- Mach, Ernst 686, 706, 755
- Mamontov, Konstantin 268n9, 755–6
- Marat 3
- Mariinsky Palace 180, 756
- Markov, Nikolai 139, 756
- Martov, Iulii 19, 78, 203, 204, 207, 208, 212–14,
217, 219, 222, 223, 229, 337, 339, 412–13,
488, 495, 500, 501–2, 505, 510, 526n11,
534, 540, 574, 598, 617, 624, 656, 660–1,
662, 683n3, 707, 722, 728, 756, 757, 761,
771, 776, 784
and *Iskra* 735
Martovites and Martovs 277, 547, 669
and Mensheviks 758, 760
- Martynov, Aleksandr 8, 103, 204, 220,
230n63, 496, 498, 526n11, 662, 757,
760
- Marx-Engels Institute 45, 774
- Marx, Karl xv, 14, 91, 362, 393, 395, 524, 525,
692, 696, 697, 698, 703, 749, 753
and American Marxists 82, 708, 778
and Engels 106, 290, 400
Legal Marxists 682–3, 713, 757, 795
- Marxism 40, 56, 76, 91, 118, 120, 290, 708, 709,
776, 788, 715, 725, 757, 776
- Babakhan on 189, 196
- Bubnov on 650, 654–5, 656, 661, 666,
667, 669
- Bukharin on 148, 152, 516, 517, 518, 522,
526, 526n11, 527, 547, 550, 552
- Kamenev on 205, 208, 213, 219–20, 222,
226, 239–40, 245
- Kanatchikov on 681–3, 686
- Krupskaia on 428
- Kun on 624–7, 634–5, 637, 642, 643, 644,
645, 646
- Kviring on 612, 613, 614, 616
- Lebed' on 169, 173
- Lenin on 10, 99, 120, 133, 183n16, 208, 750
and Marxist circles 57–8, 787
and Marxist theoreticians 3, 397, 404,
712, 713, 721, 723, 732, 733, 739, 752,
754–5, 757, 767, 770, 774, 787–8
- Molotov on 394, 414, 417, 419
and pseudo-Marxism 13, 91, 587, 616
- Stalin on 458, 469, 471
- Safarov on 492, 496, 497, 499, 499n51,
503, 505, 507, 508, 509, 511, 513
- Trotsky on 13, 20, 30, 40, 135, 287, 288,
294, 302, 308, 310, 393
- Zinoviev on 334–5, 337, 339, 347
- Mavrin, Ivan 179n6, 757
- Medvedev, Roy 77
- Mehring, Franz 290, 502, 752, 757–8
- Mezhraiontsy* (Interdistrict Organisation of
the RSDRP) 11, 78, 137, 156, 157, 289, 658,
714, 733, 754, 759, 774, 775, 792, 793,
795
- Miasnikov, G.I. 558, 558n2, 759
- Military Revolutionary Committee (VRK)
645, 674
of Moscow 7
of Petrograd 43, 110, 122, 194, 195, 197, 271,
275, 302, 328, 607n3, 675, 677–9, 706,
710, 712, 723, 731, 748, 759, 762, 768, 781,
785, 792, 793
of Ukraine 712
- Miliukov, Pavel 31, 98, 599n17, 600, 737, 738,
759, 770
Miliukovian 74
- Miliutin, Vladimir 165n4, 192n7, 251n89,
323n2, 468, 759–60

- Mir (World)* 474, 760
 Mizakian, P. 4
Molodaia gvardiia (Young Guard) 8, 706
 Molotov, Viacheslav 7, 19, 20, 30, 33, 39, 40,
 59, 743, 760, 766, 786
 on Bolshevism 398, 402, 404, 414–15, 419
 on Brest-Litovsk, Treaty of 396–7,
 408–10, 417
 on the failed revolution in Germany 387,
 389
 on Leninism 392–3, 395n35, 400, 412–20
 on Marxism 394, 414, 417, 419
 on permanent revolution 392, 415, 416–17
 on Trotskyism 387–420
 *contribution to polemic: 'On the Lessons of
 Trotskyism (L. Trotsky's Book Lenin)'*
 387–420
 Nabokov, Vladimir 80
 his father 737
Nachalo (Beginning) 424, 498, 760
 Narrow socialists (*tesniaki*) 470, 709, 713, 741,
 789
Nashe slovo (Our Word) 154, 228–9, 504–10,
 525n9, 598, 658, 663, 666, 760
Nasha zaria (Our Dawn) 223, 504, 761
 Natanson, Mark 280, 761
Neue Zeit (New Times) 425, 621, 721, 761–2
 Nevskii, Vladimir 75, 388, 389, 762
 Nogin, Viktor 102–3, 108, 251n89, 273, 324,
 349, 672, 719, 762
 mistakes of 13, 18, 165n4, 192, 192n7, 249,
 323n2
Novaia zhizn' (New Life) 12, 116–17, 228n61,
 596, 731, 754, 762, 788
Novyi mir (New World) 344, 763, 795
 Nureev, Rustem 79
 Oedipus 82
Oktiabr' (October) 79, 727, 779, 796
 Ol'minskii, Mikhail 21–2, 64n296, 421n1,
 425–6, 515, 523, 621, 625, 763
 and Istpart 7, 44, 61
 death of 81
 *contribution to polemic: Introduction
 to Lenin on Trotsky and Trotskyism*
 423–6
 Opposition 19, 35, 45, 47, 49, 50, 52, 58,
 60, 64, 68, 72, 74, 78, 102, 147, 148, 282,
 310–11, 315, 418, 482, 483–4, 518, 520,
 558, 569, 573, 580, 672, 687, 696, 707,
 763–4
 Anti-Leninist 167
 definition of xv, 13–14, 31, 53, 620–3,
 763–4
 Left Opposition 52, 67, 373, 374, 772,
 776
 Trotskyite Opposition 65–6, 76, 549,
 560–1, 562, 564, 586–7, 588, 620–3, 631
 United Opposition 67, 71, 76
 Workers' Opposition 42–3, 74, 558,
 558n2, 631–2, 742, 759, 764, 781, 797
 'Zinovievite Opposition' 66, 745, 786,
 790
 Ordzhonikidze, Sergo 13, 129, 764
 Orwell, George 82
 Ostwald, Friedrich 686, 706, 764
Osvobozhdenie (Liberation) 764, 788
 osvobozhdentsy 499, 499n52
 Paris Commune 88, 193, 578, 655, 664, 765
 Parvus, Izrail' 300, 632n19, 703, 760, 765
 on permanent revolution 29–30, 204–5,
 206, 448, 496, 498, 512, 633, 766
 and Trotsky 29–30, 31, 158, 205–6, 300,
 448, 527, 539, 630
 Paul-Boncour, Augustin 508, 765
The Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk (1962) 83
Pechat' i revoliutsiia (Print and Revolution)
 388, 765
Perestroika 84
 Permanent Revolution 766
 Bubnov on 651, 652–3, 664–6, 666–7, 670
 Bukharin on 157–8, 514, 522–9, 531–3,
 537, 544
 Kamenev on 204–5, 215, 218, 220, 229–30,
 232, 234–5, 241, 243–5
 Kun on 27–30, 628, 629n16, 631–2, 633
 Molotov on 392, 415, 416–17
 Parvus on 29–30, 204–5, 206, 448, 496,
 498, 512, 633, 766
 Safarov on 489, 494, 496–7, 498, 500, 501,
 511, 512
 Stalin on 76–7, 278–9, 435–48, 525, 766
 Stepanov on 144, 144n6
 Trotsky on 144, 299–300, 318, 583
 Ziinoviev on 337, 340, 341, 343
 Peshekhonov, Aleksei 137, 416, 416n82, 766

- Peter and Paul Fortress (*Petropavlovskaiia krepost'*) 120, 183n16, 301, 614, 716, 766–7
- Petrograd Military District 122, 197, 271, 677, 680, 767
- Photographs, falsification of 3–4, 79, 80, 84
- Piatakov, Georgii 49, 358, 369, 750, 767
on trial 782
- Pilniak, Boris 4
- Piontkovskii, Sergei 8, 20, 30, 767
arrest and execution of 81
on the February Revolution 598–9, 601–2
on the October insurrection 604–6
on the Provisional Government 601–3, 605
on Trotsky's mistakes 30, 595–606
contribution to polemic: 'Mistakes in "The Lessons of October" by Comrade Trotsky' 595–606
- Pirani, Simon 50–1, 52
- Placke, Gerd 51
- Plekhanov, Georgii 143, 155, 160, 204, 206, 206n6, 223n51, 347n44, 413, 503, 503n66, 683, 699, 707, 726, 735, 758, 767–8
Plekhanovites xv, 458, 768
- Pleve, Viacheslav 598, 768
- Podvoiskii, Nikolai 677–9, 768
- Poincaré, Raymond 639, 768
- Polynices 82
- Populism (*Narodnichestvo*) xv, 11, 75, 93, 133, 136, 137, 295, 296, 487n5, 571, 582, 682, 726, 735, 768–9, 776
'Cheliabinsk populists' 507, 508, 511, 512
Chernyshevsky and 716
populists 8, 707, 709, 724, 742, 761, 763, 767, 782, 791
left populists 94
and the Socialist Revolutionary Party 783
- Potemkin, Grigorii 505n71
- Potresov, Aleksandr 203, 208, 209, 209n11, 210, 219, 503n66, 707, 723, 735, 736, 758, 761, 769
- Pravda (Truth), Moscow 769
- Pravda (Truth), Vienna 782, 794–5
- Pravdaists 142, 145–6, 770
- Preobrazhensky, Evgenii 58, 524, 678
- Prokopovich, Sergei 597, 597n10, 770
- Proletarskaia revoliutsiia (Proletarian Revolution)* 70, 76, 98, 437, 535, 735, 770
- Prosveshchenie (Enlightenment)* 219, 339, 417, 770
- Purishkevich, Vladimir 139, 771
- Put' Pravdy (Path of Truth)* 339, 769
- Quotidien (Daily)* 591
- Rabochaia gazeta (Workers' Newspaper)* 118, 178, 656, 757, 771
- Rabochaia mysl' (Workers' Thought)* 503
- Rabochee delo (Workers' Cause)* 503
- Rabochii put' (Workers' Path)* 166, 166n7, 181n11, 185, 326, 615, 679, 769, 771
- Rabkrin (Worker and Peasant Inspectorate) 44, 319, 704, 714, 797
- Rada, Ukrainian 397, 771
- Radek, Karl 49, 57, 58, 379, 380n40, 447, 468, 477, 494, 640, 691, 771–2, 782
execution of 81
and joint theses with Trotsky 345n42, 358, 365, 369–75, 381
and permanent revolution 437, 448
on trial 80–1
- Recallists xv, 207, 208, 210, 214, 277, 426, 703, 749, 754, 764, 770, 772, 800
- Reed, John 4, 5, 27, 59, 79, 260–1, 430, 772
Ten Days That Shook The World 4, 5, 27, 59, 79, 260–1, 430, 772, 789
- Remmele, Hermann 691, 773
- Renaudel, Pierre 591, 773
- Revolutionary Military Council (RVS) 64, 65, 583, 585, 593, 653, 773–4
- Revolution of 1905 11, 20, 29, 32, 44, 83, 90, 133–4, 580, 599, 600, 627, 628, 629n16, 630, 640, 644, 651, 654, 656, 663, 665
1905 28, 585, 666–7, 670, 671, 684–5
- Revolution of 1848 82, 133n51, 435, 697n6, 709
- Reznik, Aleksandr 52
- Riazanov, David 3, 174, 220, 222n44, 520, 520n4, 661, 662, 774
- Robins, Colonel Raymond 2
- Rodzianko, Mikhail 598, 600, 774
- Rogovin, Vadim 13
- Rovenskaia, N. 138, 774
- Ruhr, occupation of 25–6, 372, 373, 639, 689–90, 691, 730, 772
- Rumer, I. 138, 775

- Russkoe slovo* (*The Russian Word*) 611, 777
- Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)
 (RKP(b) (also Bolshevik Party, RSDRP[b])
 118, 328, 610, 611, 705, 717, 741, 748, 775–6
 composition of 43, 49, 55, 145, 349,
 353–6, 360, 363, 493, 558, 566–7, 572,
 641–2
 composition, effects of Lenin Levy on 53,
 55, 60, 62, 74, 353, 354, 402, 418, 427, 563,
 566, 588, 592, 751, 775
 name-change 106, 775–6
- Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)
 (RKP(b), Conferences and Congresses,
 Seventh Conference (1917) 705, 787
 Seventh Congress (1918) 152n9, 247,
 333–4, 396, 587
 Tenth Congress (1921) 42, 167, 764, 775
 Eleventh Congress (1922) 43, 74, 167
 Thirteenth Conference (1924) 51, 687,
 750, 751, 775
 Thirteenth Congress (1924) 9, 50–1, 61,
 168, 249, 316, 401, 428, 466, 484, 555, 562,
 579, 583, 593, 635, 642, 687, 750, 776
 Fourteenth Congress (1925) 745, 776
 Fifteenth Congress (1927) 68, 748
- Russian Social Democratic Labour Party
 (RSDRP) 3, 62, 91, 155, 705, 714, 719, 749,
 758, 762, 767, 771, 776
 Bolshevik/Menshevik split in 21, 203–4,
 206, 286, 288, 346, 349–51, 403, 412, 425,
 654, 707, 724, 726, 735, 750, 753, 756, 758,
 767, 774, 791, 793, 798
 25th anniversary of (1923) 73–4
- Russian Social Democratic Labour Party
 (RSDRP) Conferences and Congresses,
 First Congress (1898) 74, 776
 Second Congress (1903) 13, 42, 44, 488,
 660–1, 707, 722, 724, 750, 752, 753, 756,
 758, 767, 774, 775, 791, 798
 Fourth (Stockholm) Congress (1906) 145
 Fifth (London) Congress (1907) 206, 214,
 338
 Sixth (Prague) Conference (1912) 42, 215,
 729, 731, 738, 769, 775, 776, 784, 786
 Sixth Congress (1917) 153, 184–5, 268, 271,
 759, 775
 Seventh (April) Conference (1917) 96,
 100–4, 152n9, 153, 164, 180, 251n89, 255,
 266, 339, 652, 672–3, 705, 775
- Russian Social Democracy 44, 73, 90, 91, 95,
 103, 108–9, 110, 111, 114, 121, 134, 154, 155,
 161, 180, 192, 210, 212, 216, 217, 261–2, 272,
 286, 287, 297, 308, 332, 338, 341, 348,
 351n48, 385, 425, 465, 470, 471, 474, 475,
 483, 487, 502, 503, 523, 586, 602, 624,
 655, 665, 696, 776
- Rykov, Aleksei 7, 13, 18, 31–2, 165n4, 192n7,
 236, 249, 251n89, 323n2, 325, 555n1, 719,
 762, 777, 780, 782, 785, 786, 790, 793
 on Bolshevism 570, 572n7, 575
 arrest and execution of 80
 on intra-party discussion 570–5
 on Trotskyism 572n7, 574–5
contribution to polemic: “The New
 Discussion”. An Article by Com. A.I.
 Rykov’ 570–5
- Safarov, Georgii 8, 21, 28, 30, 33, 39, 777–8
 arrest and execution of 81
 on Bolshevism 488, 489, 490, 492, 495,
 498, 500, 501, 502, 504, 506, 512
 on Marxism 492, 496, 497, 499, 499n51,
 503, 505, 507, 508, 509, 511, 513
 on Menshevism 485–513
 on Trotskyism 485–513
 on permanent revolution 489, 494,
 496–7, 498, 500, 501, 511, 512
contribution to polemic: ‘The Autobio-
 graphy of Trotskyism (Instead of an
 Afterword)’ 485–513
- Sbornik Sotsial-demokrata* 339
- Schapiro, Leonard 68
- Scheidemann, Philipp 224, 504n68, 778
- Second International 23, 90, 106, 211–12, 217,
 224, 230, 347, 465, 470, 471, 492, 504, 578,
 591, 592, 644, 649, 709, 734, 737, 752, 765,
 779, 787, 798
- Sedov, Lev 68
- Semerka* (*The Seven*) 80, 713, 738, 746, 777,
 779, 786, 790, 799
- September Antifascist Uprising of 1923,
 Bulgaria 8, 16–17, 24–5, 45–6, 87, 89, 136,
 159–60, 162, 374, 380, 464, 467, 468–80,
 589, 648, 703, 709, 737, 741, 780
- Serrati, Giacinto 250, 780
- Shachtman, Max 82, 780
- Shalash* and *Sarai* xv, 346, 778
- Shatrov, Mikhail 83

- The Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk* (1962) 83
- Shlyapnikov, Alexander 43, 142, 263, 674, 764, 781
- Shmidt, Vasilii 674, 781
- Shotman, Aleksandr 263, 781
- Show trials 78, 713, 725, 745, 782
- Anti-Soviet Unified Trotskyite-Zinovievite Center (1936) 80
- Parallel Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Center (1937) 80–1, 217n33, 767, 782, 784
- Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rightists and Trotskyites (1938) 80, 555n1, 704, 782
- Signposts (Vekhi)* 715
- Skobelev, Matvei 123, 505, 505n73, 506, 508n82, 720, 782
- Skvortsov-Stepanov, Ivan. See Stepanov, Ivan.
- Social Democracy 56, 133, 194, 204, 206, 217, 288, 360, 467, 494–5, 511, 517, 530–1, 550, 587, 590, 657–8, 733, 779
- in Austrian 128, 732
- in Bulgaria 470, 709, 713, 737, 741
- in Czechoslovakia 733, 744
- in Finland 131, 385, 727
- in Germany 46, 128, 290, 305, 339–40, 346–7, 372, 378, 380, 489, 496, 591, 642, 708, 722, 724, 729, 732, 750, 751, 757, 778
- in Hungary 131–2, 746–7
- in Poland 718, 725
- in Russia 44, 73, 90, 91, 95, 103, 108–9, 110, 111, 114, 121, 134, 154, 155, 161, 180, 192, 210, 212, 216, 217, 261–2, 272, 286, 287, 297, 308, 332, 338, 341, 348, 351n48, 385, 425, 465, 470, 471, 474, 475, 483, 487, 502, 503, 523, 586, 602, 624, 655, 665, 696, 776
- in Sweden 733
- ‘Socialism in One Country’ 53–4, 435, 441–3, 445, 447, 459–60, 462, 463, 766, 786, 792
- Socialist Revolutionary Party (search Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs) 143, 192n7, 251, 271, 323, 434, 452–3, 635, 669, 716, 720, 740, 758, 769, 783, 785, 788, 796, 798
- Left Socialist Revolutionaries 78, 150, 245, 263, 264, 327, 328, 330, 331, 332, 527, 544–5, 720, 733, 761, 783, 786
- Sokol’nikov, Grigorii 7, 20, 30, 198, 261, 283n1, 325, 674, 783–4
- on the April demonstration 177–9
- on Bolshevism 180, 185
- arrest and execution of 80–1, 782
- on disagreements in the party 54, 176–80, 182–3, 186
- on Kamenev’s and Zinoviev’s mistakes 185
- on the Kornilov Affair 184–5
- on the timing of the insurrection 182–3, 183n16
- on Trotsky’s mistakes 20, 23, 345–6, 604, 176–80
- contribution to polemic: ‘How Should the History of October be Approached? (Comrade Trotsky’s “The Lessons of October”)’* 176–88
- Soldat (Soldier)* 679
- Sotsial-demokrat (Social Democrat)* 228, 229, 443, 470, 488, 492, 504, 507, 509, 510, 658, 666, 784
- Sotsialisticheskii vestnik (Socialist Courier)* 55, 315, 482, 784, 722, 758, 775, 784
- South Russian Union 654
- Souvarine, Boris 36, 60, 71, 591, 784–5
- Sovnarkom (Council of People’s Commissars) 1, 7, 117, 118, 122, 194, 271, 330, 345n41, 571, 716, 720, 735, 738, 745, 750, 760, 777, 785
- Spiridonova, Maria 544, 785–6
- Stalin, Joseph 5, 7, 10, 19, 12, 33, 34, 43, 44, 48, 50, 51, 57–9, 63, 64, 66–8, 71, 73, 76–9, 80, 200, 251n89, 322, 428, 557, 674, 692, 786–7
- in alliance with Zinoviev and Kamenev 51–2, 53, 56, 66, 80, 738–9, 776, 786
- on Bolshevism 262, 266, 279, 280, 282, 434, 437
- on Brest-Litovsk, Treaty of 333n20
- on Leninism 260–82
- on Marxism 458, 469, 471
- on the mistakes of Zinoviev and Kamenev 18, 264, 266, 457
- on the October insurrection 27, 260–4, 432–63
- on permanent revolution 276–7, 278–9, 435–48, 525, 766
- and *The History of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) Short Course* 77–9, 734

- on 'Socialism in One Country' 435,
441–3, 445, 447, 459–60, 462, 463
on Trotskyism 260–82
*contributions to polemic: 'Trotskyism or
Leninism'* 260–82
'The October Revolution and the Tactics of
Russian Communists' 432–63
Stalinism, xv 83
Stamboliiskii, Aleksandar 472–3, 476, 478,
703, 780, 787
Steiner, George 82
Stepanov, Ivan 7, 22, 29, 81, 782
on disagreements in the party 24, 141, 145
on the October insurrection 139–46
on permanent revolution 144, 144n6
on the revolution of 1905 139, 140, 144, 145
*contribution to polemic: 'Who Carried
Out the October Revolution? (On the
"History" of October in L. Trotsky's
Book 1917)'* 139–46
Stockholm Peace Conference (1917) 105–6,
470, 787
Stolypin, Petr 140, 209, 501, 685, 787
Stolypin reforms 746
Stolypinshchina 500, 772, 787
Struve, Petr 458, 499n51, 499n52, 683, 737,
764, 787–8
Sukhanov, Nikolai 137, 180, 228n61, 260, 262,
263, 269, 301, 346, 550, 720, 762, 788
Sverdlov, Iakov 251n89, 261, 263, 333n20, 389,
428, 674, 788–9
Sverdlov Communist University 762, 791
Syrkin 261, 430, 789

Tailism (*khvostizm*) 500, 512, 637, 637n29,
641, 643, 644, 645, 646, 789
Tausves Jontof 57, 692, 789
Telephone, electric xvii
Ten Days That Shook The World 4, 5, 27, 59,
79, 260–1, 430, 772
Terracini, Umberto 468, 789
tesniaki (narrow socialists) 470, 709, 713, 741,
789
Third International 105n19, 157, 223, 224,
229–30, 347, 392, 398, 496, 504, 690,
717–18, 755
The Times (London) 6
Thomas, Albert 508, 790
Toker, Leona 79, 80
Tolstoy, Aleksei 4, 520n4, 743
Tomsky, Mikhail 7, 64, 555n1, 779, 790
death of 80, 790
Trade unions, discussion of 19, 30, 42, 50, 64,
74, 90, 129, 131–2, 167, 247, 249, 293, 319,
345, 357, 359, 361, 401, 417–18, 485, 516,
532, 558, 564, 570, 575, 577, 580, 587, 619,
631–6, 646, 687, 693, 764, 774, 781, 790
Trevelyan, George Macauley 82
Trotsk 4
formerly called Gatchina 3, 680
Trotsky, Leon 791–2
on the April Theses 96, 291
on Blanquism 100, 301–4
on Bolshevism 93, 95–6, 97, 110, 136, 284,
286–90, 296, 300, 582
on Brest-Litovsk, Treaty of 112
on the bureaucratisation of the party and
state 5, 43–4, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 67, 128,
132, 458, 483, 605, 649, 722
dismissal, exile, murder, and rehabilitation
of 65, 68–9, 72, 79, 82, 84–5, 654
on the failed revolution in Bulgaria 87–9,
136
on the failed revolution in Germany
87–9, 111, 113, 115–16, 130, 134, 135, 136,
291–2, 294, 311–12, 316, 584
on the Kornilov Affair 96, 104–9, 114, 116,
126, 129–30
as 'Lenin's cudgel' 3, 203, 220, 661
on Leninism 301–4
letter to Chkheidze 21, 212n17, 276, 277,
285–6, 421–3, 425, 501, 619, 657n37,
659
on Marxism 13, 20, 30, 40, 135, 287, 288,
294, 302, 308, 310, 393
and the *mezhrainontsy* 11, 78, 137, 156, 157,
289, 658, 714, 733, 754, 759, 774, 775, 792,
793, 796
on the mistakes of Kamenev and Zinoviev
110, 116–17, 133, 296–7, 298, 299
as Napoleon 2
and Parvus 29–30, 31, 158, 205–6, 300,
448, 527, 539, 630
on permanent revolution 144, 299–300,
318, 583
as *Pero* (The Pen) 3
on Red Terror 312–13, 314
role in Civil War 2–3, 58, 66, 70, 79, 83

- Trotskyite Opposition 65–6, 76, 549,
560–1, 562, 564, 586–7, 588, 620–3,
631
on Trotskyism 283–5, 286, 289, 290–1,
293, 296, 299, 300, 308, 314, 316, 319
*contributions to polemic: 'The Lessons of
October'* 86–138
'Our Differences' 283–321
'Letter from Comrade Trotsky to the
Plenum of the Central Committee
of the Russian Communist Party
(Bolshevik)' 582–5
Trotskyism 19, 20, 24, 29, 31–5, 38–9, 41,
50, 57–8, 59, 61, 62, 65–72, 75, 76, 78,
80–4
Andreev on 577
Bubnov on 76, 653, 660–3, 670
Bukharin on Trotskyism 65, 516–22,
560–2
Kamenev on 20–21, 32–3, 65, 72, 257–9,
199–259
Kun on 32, 39–40, 57, 619–23, 626–8,
634–7, 641, 646
Molotov on 387–420
Rykov on 572n7, 574–5
Safarov on 485–513
Stalin on 260–82
Trotsky on 283–5, 286, 289, 290–1, 293,
296, 299, 300, 308, 314, 316, 319
Zinoviev on, on Trotskyism 31, 33,
322–64
Tsankov, Aleksandar 46, 87, 159, 160, 468,
472, 477, 479, 703, 780, 792
Tsarskoe selo 680
Tsereteli, Iraklii 106, 123, 137, 206, 301,
416n82, 720, 773, 792–3, 795
'Tushino turncoats' 220, 224–5, 488, 501, 661,
793
Ultimatists (*ultimatisty*) 685, 749, 793
Union of Railway Workers (Vikzhel') 8, 115,
118, 262–3, 327, 329–32, 704, 795
United Opposition 67, 71, 76
United States of Europe 224, 442–3, 507–9,
511
Urals Regional Committee (Uralobkom)
60
Uritskii, Moisei 119, 261, 263, 674, 793
Vardin 414, 794
'Vardinism' 569, 569n5
Vikzhel' (Union of Railway Workers) 8, 115,
118, 262–3, 327, 329–32, 704, 795
Voitinskii, Vladimir 349, 706, 795
Volkogonov, Dmitrii 10
Volodarsky, V. 107n25, 263, 325, 674,
795–6
Vorwärts (Forward) 501, 591, 730, 744, 796
Vpered (Forward) 749, 763
Vpered group 685, 703, 754
Vperedism xv, 350, 749, 796
Vperedists 209, 214, 350, 686, 749
Vyshinsky, Andrei 78
War Communism 42, 245, 247–8, 587, 631,
632, 636, 687, 717, 796
Weber, Hermann 53
Williams, Albert Rhys 37
Winter Palace xv, 125, 678–9, 705, 714, 740,
766, 796–7
Worker and Peasant Inspectorate (Rabkrin)
44, 319, 704, 714, 797
Workers' Opposition 42–3, 74, 558, 558n2,
631–2, 742, 759, 764, 781, 797
Workers' Truth Group 42, 764, 797
Wrangel', Baron Peter 499n51, 797
Wrangelites 471, 797
Wright, John G. xiii
Zalutskii, Petr 564, 797–8
Zaria (Dawn) 315, 683n3, 736, 771, 798
Dawn of Freedom (Zaria svobody) 678, 798
Zetkin, Clara 421, 468, 798
Zhordaniia, Noi 491, 491n9, 505, 798
Zimmerwald Conference 169, 507, 707, 733,
740, 741, 748, 761, 773, 779, 798–9
Zimmerwald Centre 224
Zimmerwaldists 104, 707, 773, 792, 795
Zimmerwald Left 150, 157, 224, 229–30,
337, 344, 470, 507, 512, 798
Zinoviev, Grigorii 4, 7, 8–9, 19, 24, 26, 38, 40,
43, 58, 59, 60, 61, 65, 68, 69, 72, 76, 108,
110, 116, 152n9, 165n4, 194, 309, 316–17,
799
in alliance with Kamenev and Stalin
51–2, 53, 56, 66, 80, 692, 738–9, 776, 786
arrest and execution 80
on Bolshevism 322–64

- and the Comintern 25, 46, 376, 639–40, 690–1
- on the failed revolution in Bulgaria 475–6, 478
- on the failed revolution in Germany 46–7, 372–3, 376–7, 379–81, 691
- on Leninism 334–45
- on Marxism 334–5, 337, 339, 347
- mistakes of 10, 11–13, 16, 18, 67, 68, 80, 165, 166, 192, 192n7, 236–7, 249–52, 261–2, 264, 322–34, 323n2, 400, 648, 674
- on the October insurrection 322–34
- on permanent revolution 337, 340, 341, 343
- on Trotskyism 31, 33, 322–64
- party histories 74–5, 170
- ‘Zinovievite Opposition’ 66–7, 78, 745, 786, 790
- contribution to polemic: ‘Bolshevism or Trotskyism (Where the Trotskyist Line is Leading)’* 322–64
- Zoshchenko, Mikhail 70–1, 800
- Zvezda (Star)* 218, 726, 745, 748, 800